Answers Within

How to Use Your Inner Voice for Wisdom, Spirituality and Psychic Awareness

Robert Peterson

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Also by Robert S. Peterson

Out of Body Experiences

Lessons Out of the Body

The Gospel According to Mike

Answers Within

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First Edition

ISBN 978-1475139655

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'd like to thank the following people for their support:

My wife Kathy, whose love and encouragement keeps me flying high, and whose wholesomeness keeps me centered and grounded.

Tammy Pierson, who encouraged me and kept me inspired to move forward.

Phil Bolsta, who agreed to “Mutually Assured Creation.”

Madonna Kettler, for her suggestions.

“Far atop a Himalayan mountain,

in a remote region of Tibet,

there once lived a holy teacher from the East.

Some claimed he was a man, some a woman.

Unsure which, they just called him teacher or guru.

People said his wisdom surpassed all others,

that he had a special connection to God.

He lived atop the mountain for many years,

spreading his teachings of love and God

to anyone who would listen,

but he never gave his name.

One day he stood up and walked away.

Bewildered, his disciples were outraged.

They asked, “Why are you leaving us?”

He smiled warmly, “I will never leave you.”

They asked, “Where are you going?

Where can we find you?”

He turned, patted his chest, and said,

“Only one place.”

He left the mountain and was never seen again.

He's still alive today, and lives in a sacred place:

Your heart, dear reader,

Your heart.”

--Inner Voice

Introduction

It was Saturday, February 27, 2010 at 7:00am. I stood at my dresser, looking into a drawer full of shirts, getting ready to start my busy day. I was completely dressed except for a shirt.

I've got lots of shirts to choose from. I prefer T-shirts because they make a statement. February isn't exactly T-shirt weather in Minnesota, but it was unusually warm that day and I had a jacket to wear over it.

I opened a drawer and examined my options. I thumbed through them all, closed that drawer and opened the next one down. More T-shirts. Lots of T-shirts.

I had T-shirts from rock bands: Nightwish, Dream Theater, Yes, and more. I had T-shirts from various causes: the Monroe Institute, my motor-cycle club, the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Computing. I had T-shirts from my employer, Red Hat, and former employers, plus a few slogan-centric T-shirts to make you think. One said, “I've gone to find myself: if I'm not back before I return, keep me here.” Another said, “Out of body: back in five minutes.”

Then there were my cherished travel T-shirts. Since my wife Kathy and I didn’t have kids, we spent our life together doing what we loved best: international travel. On my Facebook page, I had a “Cities Visited” tab and had tagged 301 cities in 34 countries, and from every trip I brought home two cherished mementos: an item that signified the prominent religion of the country we visited, and a T-shirt. I had T-shirts from the United States as well: Sturgis, South Dakota; Sedona, Arizona; and Clearwater Beach, Florida, to name a few.

I looked at the T-shirts but couldn't decide which to wear. I don't typically consult my inner voice on such mundane topics, but what the heck, it was free advice. I got quiet for a moment and asked, “What do you think?”

With characteristic calm detachment, my inner voice cheerfully said, “How about your 'Chile' shirt?”

“Sure, why not.” I thought to myself.

I dug through the drawers until I found the black Chile T-shirt and pulled it over my head. A few minutes later I was out the door to visit my mom in the nursing home where she was recovering from a broken hip.

When I walked into my mom’s room, her television was on: Chile had been hit with a massive 8.8 earthquake, one of the biggest ever recorded. I was floored. I stood and stared at the television, mouth agape. Then I looked down at my Chile T-shirt and thought, “Wow.”

How could I—how could it—have known? Sure, I had gotten “psychic” information from my inner voice countless times, but after all these years it still rattled my sense of scientific order.

Too bad most people don't pay more attention to their inner voice, I thought. In today's world, we can all use as much wisdom and intuition as we can get. I had started writing a book about my inner voice years ago and sensed this was a gentle prod to finish the book.

Let me warn you upfront: What I've written in this book is not as important as this: “The answers you seek are within you.” That’s worth repeating: “The answers you seek are within you.”

This probably isn't a startling revelation; but I imagine you feel that the answers you’re looking for are anywhere else but inside you. I assure you, they're all there; the challenge is learning how to fish those answers out into the open, into your conscious awareness. That's where I can help.

Speaking of fishing, a wise man once said, “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, but teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.” The same goes for spirituality: A book of profound wisdom can feed you, spiritually, for a day. If that's what you want, there are plenty of books that do that. I'd rather teach you how to get your own answers so you'll be fed, spiritually, for life. What I want to share with you is the process of learning how to talk—and listen—to your inner voice.

The trouble is, we are usually given vague (or worse, incorrect) instructions on how to communicate with our inner voice. You've probably heard it described as one-way communication steeped in mysticism or religion: perform a ceremony, cast a spell, recite a prayer and hope for the best.

Wrong. The communication is always two-way. It's just that our brains have complex "noise filters" (for lack of better words) to keep "what's not important" from bubbling to the surface. We're taught from an early age that messages that come from inside are products of our imagination and not to be trusted.

It's like straining to hear a whisper in a rock concert, a heartbeat without a stethoscope, or a vinyl record without an amplifier; the amplitude of the sound is too weak to hear without help.

We're not given better instructions because it's almost impossible to describe. We lack the words for such inner processes. Plus, only crazy people talk to themselves, right?

I'm going to demystify the process of communicating with your inner voice, give you the tools necessary to get your own answers, help you zero in on your own inner wisdom, and develop your psychic awareness. The best way to do that is to describe how I did it myself. I hope you follow along and develop your own inner dialog as we go. I'm also including lots of short, easy, fun "psychic development exercises" and "musical interludes" that will help bring your inner voice to the surface.

This is more of a "how to" book than a teaching book. In other words, more of a recipe book than a text book. I'm a little leery of self-proclaimed teachers. My favorite quote from the Tao Te Ching (the holy book of Taoism) is "Those who know do not teach. Those who teach do not know." Oh, sure, I'll throw in a philosophical quote at the beginning of each chapter, but just for fun, instead of philosophers, I'm going to use lyrics from rock music instead. Unconventional wisdom to get you thinking outside the box! Also, I'll embed the key points within each chapter for quick reference.

I started developing these techniques in 1980. I call the process “The Wisdom Game.” Let's play!

Robert Peterson, January, 2012

Chapter 1

“If you open your mind for me

You won't rely on open eyes to see

The walls you built within

Come tumbling down

and a new world will begin”

--Queensrÿche, “Silent Lucidity”

The Wisdom Game

My spiritual journey began in 1979 when I read the book Journeys Out of the Body by Robert Monroe. I was 18 years old. The book set me on a wild roller-coaster ride of out-of-body experiences (OBEs) that I documented in my first two books, Out of Body Experiences: How to Have Them and What to Expect and Lessons Out of the Body. Fascinated with written accounts of leaving the body, I started studying and practicing meditation, lucid dreaming, self-hypnosis, and of course, OBEs. In all this experimentation, I discovered my inner voice.

My inner voice was not a startling “knock you on the head with a two by four” revelation like my OBEs had been, and yet it changed my life more profoundly. My OBEs were the fireworks, my inner voice was the whisper. My OBEs were the proof, my inner voice was the lesson.

I was not awakened in the middle of the night by a ten-thousand year old spirit master ready to channel a book (in fact, I'm very skeptical of such claims). Its development was a very subtle series of inner events. In fact, it was so subtle that I failed to document much about it in my spiritual journals, except for a passing note here and there. Yet if I'd have known where it would take me, I would have written down everything. And it all started as a game.

It was a cold winter evening in January 1980. I was a freshman at the University of Minnesota's Institute of Technology, starting on my Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science. Back then when I wasn't studying OBEs, I lived and breathed computers. I was a member of several computer clubs, and enjoyed writing my own computer programs just for fun.

On that particular evening, I was in the basement of Lind Hall, using one of the University's computer labs. I was working late into the evening, trying to figure out why my pet program was failing when suddenly I looked down at my watch and saw it was 9:30pm. I had just enough time to get to the bus stop and catch my bus to Minneapolis. If I missed that bus, the next one wasn't until after 11:00pm and I wouldn't get home until almost midnight. I logged off, grabbed my backpack and bolted out the door.

I got to the bus stop just in time; a bus pulled up and I got aboard. I paid my fare and the bus started trundling toward downtown Minneapolis. I found an empty seat, sat down and breathed a sigh of relief, glad that I had not missed the bus. I congratulated myself: I sure was lucky to have looked at my watch when I did. But as a computer programmer, I often over-analyze things. I even over-analyze myself. So I asked myself: what had caused me to check my watch at that precise moment in the computer lab when I had

been so focused on programming? Luck, I told myself, nothing more than luck.

When the bus got to Third Avenue in downtown Minneapolis, I got off and waited for my next bus to take me home in Northeast (“Nordeast”) Minneapolis. I peered down the street, but there was no bus in sight.

The January air was crisp and cold and I started pacing to keep warm. As I waited alone at the bus stop, there was nothing to do. I was bored and my mind started wandering.

Some people in that situation might daydream about winning the lottery or maybe basking on a hot beach in Maui or Malibu, watching beautiful women walk by in their bikinis. Not me.

First, I thought about my favorite television show, Kung Fu, starring David Carradine. It always had tidbits of wisdom sprinkled throughout the show. I wished I could be wise like the show's Shaolin masters. I wondered, “What would Master Po say to me if he was a real person standing next to me at this bus stop?” In my imagination I put myself in Kwai Chang Caine's shoes. He’d probably say something like, “Grasshopper, you must learn patience. The bus will get here when it does.”

I frowned. Master Po was never quite that shallow. Surely he'd have something else to say, something really deep, spiritual and profound. Maybe he'd look at me with that infectious loving smile and say “Grasshopper, why do you still doubt yourself?”

Did I doubt myself? Maybe. Was that profound? Maybe. What made me think of that? Beats me, it was just the first thing that came to mind. What surprised me was that the question, “Why do you still doubt yourself?” wasn't half bad for making up something “deep.”

I stepped closer to the curb and looked down the street. Still no sign of a bus.

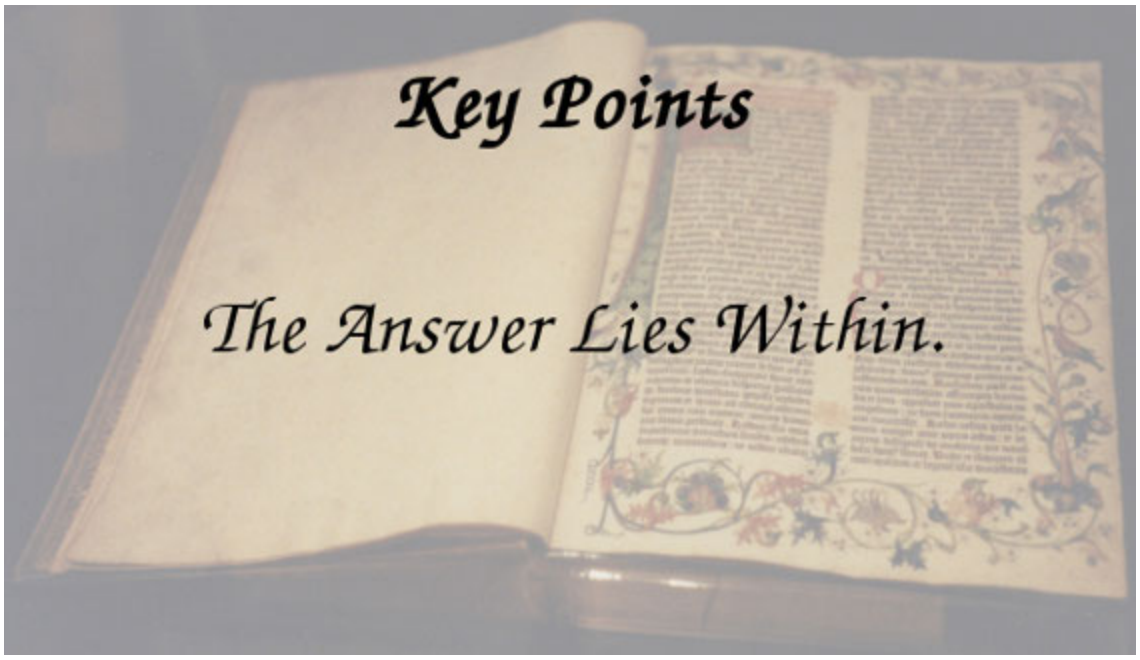
My mind continued to wander as I walked back to the building threshold to shelter myself from the biting wind.

I remembered a story in the Bible about King Solomon (1 Kings, 3: 5-13) where God offered to give Solomon anything he wanted. Solomon chose the gift of wisdom and he was well rewarded for his choice. I wondered what it would be like if I was wise: “If I was wise,” I thought to myself, “I could probably think up any question and look inside and find a truly wise answer there.”

So I asked myself: What if I was that guy at the top of the Himalayan mountain? You know, that guy with the long white beard that people climbed the mountain to see; the super-guru. Wouldn't it be cool to have access to that much wisdom, that level of knowledge?

Shivering, I felt small and insignificant. Maybe someday, I thought, I could harness out-of-body experiences enough to gain some of that ancient

wisdom. I started to fantasize, asking myself philosophical questions and making up the answers, pretending I was wise.



What's the first question someone would ask me after climbing to the top of my mountain? The question, “What's the meaning of life?” is an oldie but goodie, so why not start there, I thought. I paused to find a truly wise answer in my head. How would King Solomon reply? What would Kung Fu’s Master Khan or Master Po say? Better yet, what would Jesus say? I imagined them all sitting together in a committee in heaven. They'd probably all vote unanimously and I would have to concur: “Love.”

Then I imagined the poor tired man who had climbed the mountain to visit me. Right now he'd be standing in front of me defiantly, hands on his hips, saying, “I risked life and limb and climbed twenty-one thousand feet of sheer cliffs for one lousy word? What kind of candy-ass new-age mumbo-jumbo crap are you trying to feed me anyway?”

You climbed the wrong mountain, dude. There's no guru here. Try the next mountain over. No, I couldn't say that. He'd come a long way, so I should reward him for his effort. I'd have to scramble. I'd have to dig deeper inside myself and elaborate, give him something more profound. I'd have to justify my answer. I paused again to reflect. Why was "love" the obvious answer? I didn't have a good answer for that, so instead I asked myself a related question on behalf of my imaginary climber: "What is love?" What would I tell him?

When I read a story, I repeat the words to myself and imagine the characters acting out the scene. So when I asked myself the question, "what is love," I tried to visualize love. It looked like those plastic model molecules they had in high school chemistry class, but there were millions of them, floating in space, and they were all drawn to one another. I visualized the concept of molecular binding and that image gave me an idea for an answer: "Love is the binding force of the universe."

Well, that answer was better than nothing, I thought to myself. Better than a single word. If the mountain climber isn't satisfied with that, I'd have to give him the next question free of charge! And right now, having just reached the summit, he's too tired to start back down again. So what would his next question likely be? Perhaps he was on a quest for self-realization, so "Who am I?" was my guess.

I paused to imagine the wisest answer I could give. After rejecting a few lame answers, I decided I'd answer, "You are a spark of God's divine Light." Again, I visualized a spark of light coming from heaven and landing on Earth.

I shivered from the cold that seeped through my winter jacket. I walked back to the curb and looked down the street again. My bus still wasn't there, so I continued the daydream.

I decided I had taken too much time to pause and reflect on the answers. A super-guru with a long white beard wouldn’t have paused for the answers. He would just have all the answers and they'd just roll off his tongue like water in a stream. This time, for the sake of speed, I decided to use the first semi-wise thing that came to mind rather than dwell on the perfect answer.

I asked myself another question. “What is the key to world peace?” My made-up reply, the first semi-wise thing that came to mind was “Understanding.” Like before, the answer seemed too vague, too short, too open-ended, too new-age. The mountain climber would frown at another one-word answer. But it was the first thing that came to mind.

I decided to play devil's advocate and put myself in his shoes. What if I had received that answer instead of giving it? I quickly reversed roles, assuming the role of the mountain climber. I was about to make up a complaint to the imaginary guru, but then decided if the guru before me was truly wise, he would stick to his answer, having received it directly from God, the source of all wisdom. A wise guru never backpedals!

Switching roles again, I quickly rattled off an imaginary list of guru-excuses to defend my one-word answer; the first things that came into my head. “Understanding. If all the people of the world understood one another and their motivations; if they understood themselves and their own spiritual direction; if they fully understood their relationship with God and their lessons in life, and why we are all here, and the disturbing effects of

violence, then there would be world peace. Therefore, I chose the word 'Understanding' to convey this.” Again, images accompanied the thoughts.

That was close, I thought. I had nearly been caught impersonating a wise guru, but had successfully wormed my way out of the sticky situation. Maybe they'd let me keep the guru T-shirt with the words WISE GUY I had stolen for just one more day.

I was a little bit surprised at “my” answer. After all, I was just playing devil’s advocate with myself, and it pointed out how shallow my “normal” thoughts were. Still, it didn’t sound a whole lot like me. It sounded wiser. A lot wiser.

But I was just making up the answers, wasn’t I? It sure seemed like it, but then again, I was also just narrating to myself the first thoughts that came into my head.

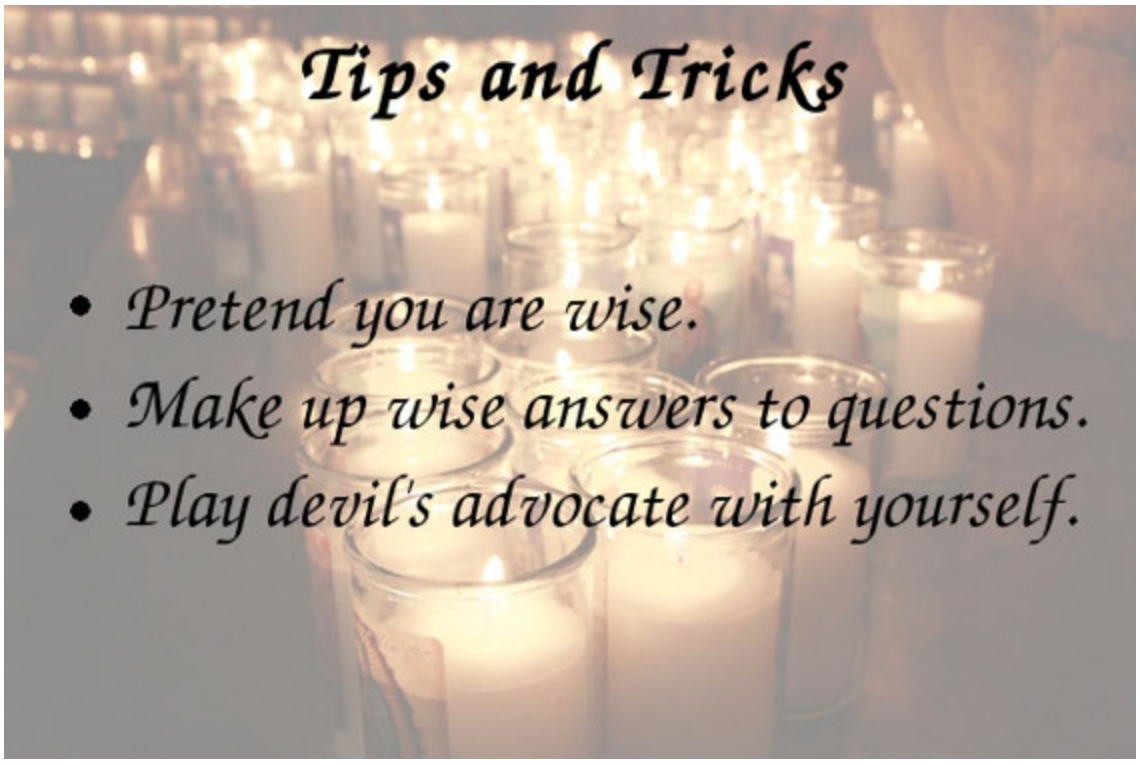
I decided this was a game; a fun way to distract myself from the cold. I decided to call it “The Wisdom Game” and it was a great way to pass the time waiting for a bus. It was certainly better than shivering and feeling sorry for myself for living in the arctic hinterlands of Minnesota.

I walked to the curb again and peered down the street. Off in the distance, I saw the headlights of a bus approaching from the south.

Before the bus arrived, I asked myself one more question. “Alright, smart ass, how can one person change the world?”

The first thing that came to my mind: “To change the world, we must change ourselves. For we are a part of the world, and that’s where we must start. We must make ourselves a fertile garden so that the trees of wisdom, the flowers of love and the seeds of change will grow and blossom around us, spreading their seeds to others.”

That definitely didn't sound like me. It sounded more like Gandhi. I didn't know it at the time, but Gandhi once said we must “Be the change we wish to see in the world.” The heavy metal band Within Temptation said that too, but I'm getting ahead of myself.



As I got on the bus, my mind went off in a decidedly shallow direction. My little wisdom game had been fun and I had kept myself distracted from the cold until the bus came.

When I got home, it was nearly eleven o'clock. I kicked off my winter boots, trudged into my bedroom, unslung and dropped my backpack and coat on the floor. I thought about writing in my spiritual journal, but I dismissed the idea because I was too tired. It was just a game, a silly way to pass the time, and nothing seemed the slightest bit out of the ordinary, at least compared to what else was happening in my life. Bear in mind that back then I was just starting to have out-of-body experiences, feel vibrations and swaying in my body, see strange and frightening images in the dark, take the words out of people's mouths, and a whole lot of other things that seemed stranger at the time.

Let's Play!
Be the Guru
Find a quiet space and time and just pretend you are a wise guru. Pretend you know the answers. Ask yourself some questions that only a guru would know. Then answer them as best as you can. Give a truly wise answer to each question. Try to use the first thing that pops into your mind, but if that's garbage, use the second or third.

Chapter 2

“Don't let the day go by,

Don't let it end,

Don't let a day go by in doubt,

The answer lies within.”

--Dream Theater, “The Answer Lies Within”

The Communications Protocol

The next morning, I got ready to go back to the University and stepped out into the cold winter air again with my backpack slung over my shoulder. As I walked to my bus stop, I thought about my wisdom game and decided to play again.

If I was a wise man, I postulated, what's the next question someone would ask? Then I switched gears. On second thought, forget “someone.” What question would I want answered? I searched my mind for a suitable question to pose to a hypothetically wiser version of myself.

As I walked, I imagined myself at the top of the Himalayan mountain again, sitting cross-legged, stroking a long white beard. I imagined myself wearing long saffron Buddhist robes and wooden beads around my neck. I also imagined bare feet, but I wouldn't be cold because my wisdom and direct

pipeline with God would override all worldly concerns. Then I imagined an exhausted mountain climber standing before me, hands on hips, demanding an answer.

“What should I do with my time on Earth?”

My mind went blank. Nothing. I was stumped. I couldn’t think of a single wise answer. Nothing came to me off the top of my head like it had the night before. All I could imagine was Curly Joe from the Three Stooges saying, “Oh a wise guy, ay? Nyuk, nyuk, nyuk.”

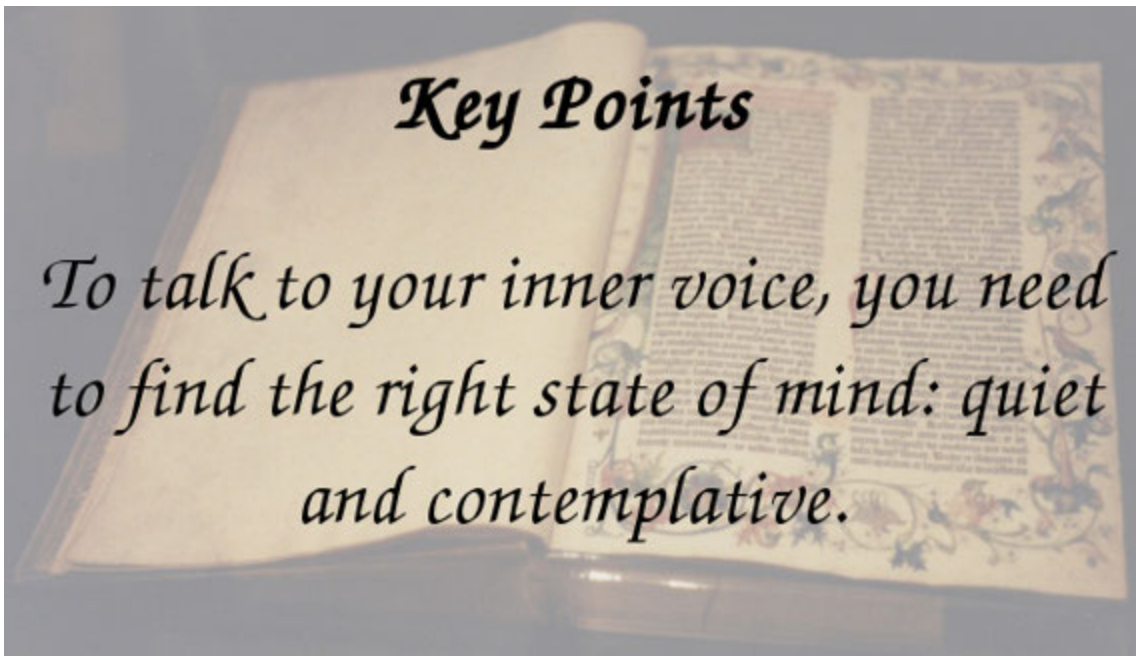
Not to be daunted, I tried again. Maybe I was asking the wrong question, I thought. I posed another. Something easier. “Do power and money really corrupt?”

Absolutely nothing. My mind was blank. That should be an easy one, so why isn't this working, I wondered? Maybe the traffic noise on Central Avenue was too distracting.

I took another approach. I went back to a question I had asked the night before. I reasoned that since I had manufactured a decent answer then, I should be able to come up with the same answer now. If I ask myself “What is love?” the answer should still be “Love is the binding force of the universe.” Repeatability is the key to science, right?

I arrived at the bus stop and saw a bus coming, which interrupted my thoughts. When the bus pulled up I got aboard, paid my fare and found a seat. Then I continued my train of thought as the bus headed downtown.

Hugging my backpack full of books, I closed my eyes and tried to quiet my mind and tune out the distractions. I imagined myself at the top of the mountain again, with robes, beads, beard, and an exhausted mountain climber asking me, “What is love?”



How should I answer? I thought about it for a while and decided to morph the first random image that came into my mind into a suitable answer. I closed my eyes and waited for a stray thought to pop into my head, no matter how crazy.

My eyes were still closed, but outside the bus, I heard the noises of a construction site as we went by. The first image that popped into my mind

was a pile of cement blocks. That gave me an idea for my answer. “Love is the building block of the Creator.”

That kind of surprised me. I half expected the same answer I had “made up” the night before. Either that or no answer at all. I never expected a different answer altogether.

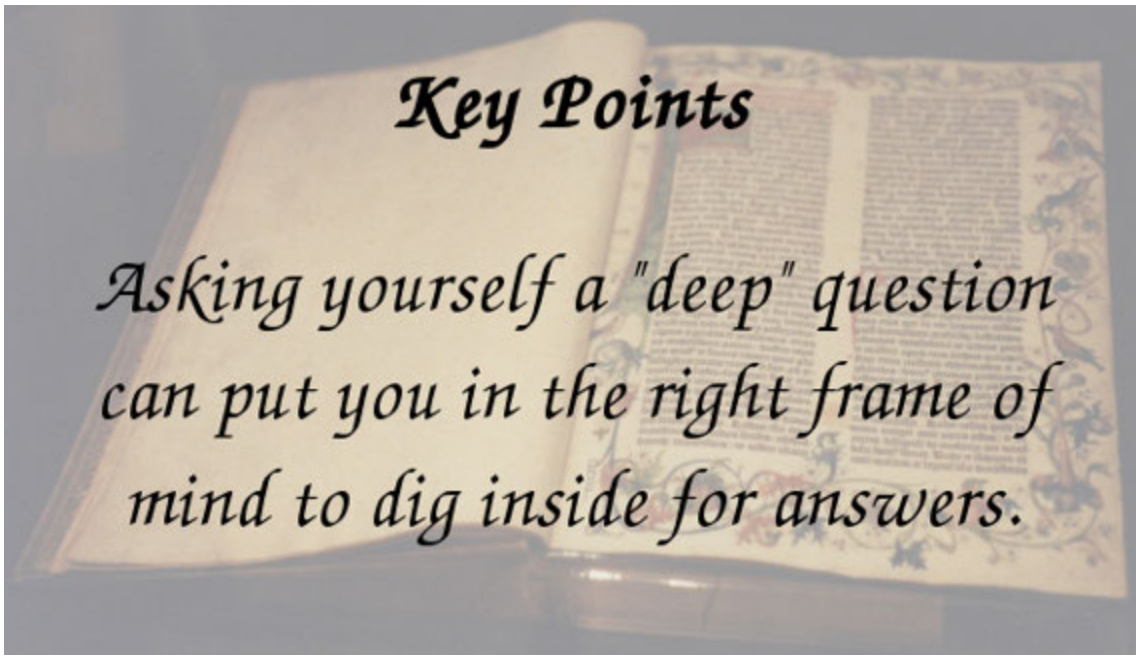
Although I didn’t realize it at the time, I had accidentally stumbled on a valuable trick of the trade: It was like priming a well or a water pump. In order to get water out, you need to first pour some water into the system. The “water” my inner voice needed was a question that triggered the proper state of mind: “What is love?”

I was a computer programmer, and in computer lingo, I had just used a question to establish a protocol for communications with my inner voice.

For people who don't know computers, a protocol is a set of rules that determine the format and transmission of data. Since computers can transmit and receive data in many different ways, certain rules have to be followed to establish communications.

It's like walking up to a total stranger in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Assuming we both know a couple of languages, before I can start talking I first need to ask, “Do you speak English?” She might answer, “No. Se habla Espanol?” Since I don't know Spanish, I'd counter with, “No. Sprechen Sie Deutsch?” If she says, “Ja,” then we both know how to communicate: in German. Sehr gut: We just successfully initiated communications by

establishing a common protocol. In this case, it's a common language, German.



By asking myself “What is love?” I was initiating contact and negotiating a common protocol: my inner voice and I were talking in a compatible way. It was a way to get the information to start flowing. You can also think of it as taking a step back from yourself; allowing yourself to pay attention to what occurs in the spaces between your thoughts: reading between the lines of your mind.

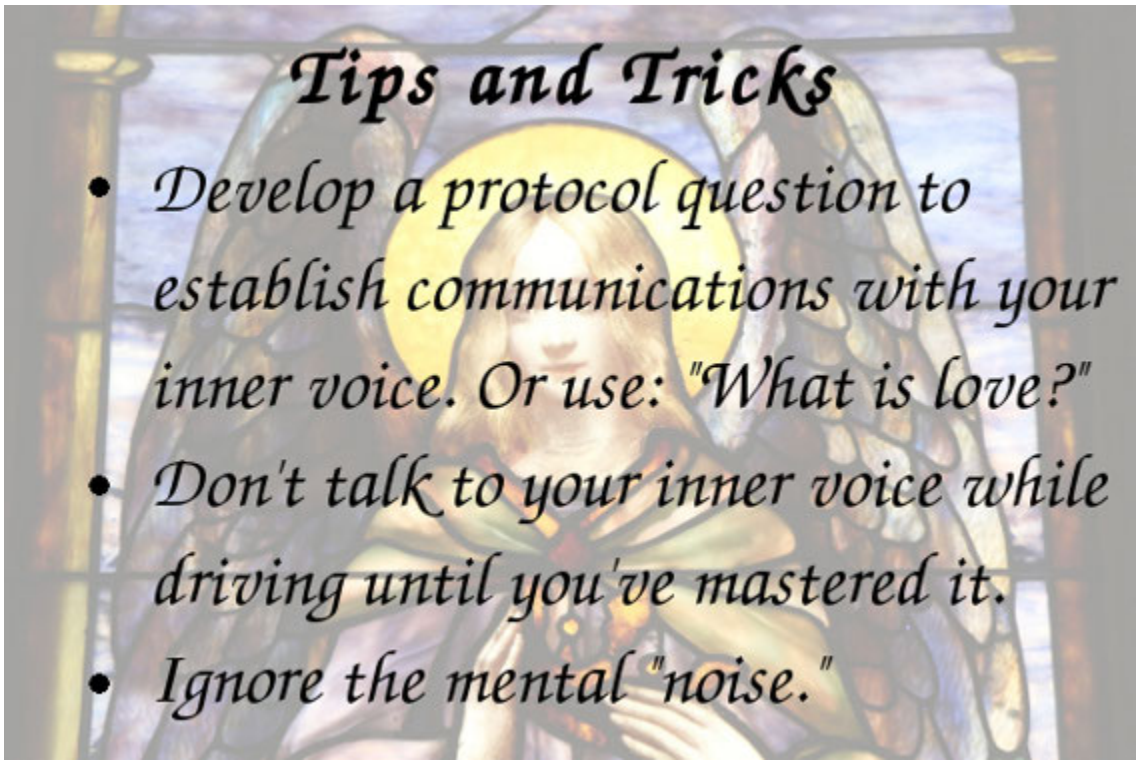
From that day on I have often initiated contact with my inner voice by first asking my protocol question, “What is love?” Believe it or not, I have never gotten the same answer twice.

Once I had initiated the protocol (I was in the proper state of mind), the answers started flowing and I asked my first question again. “What should we do with our time on Earth?”

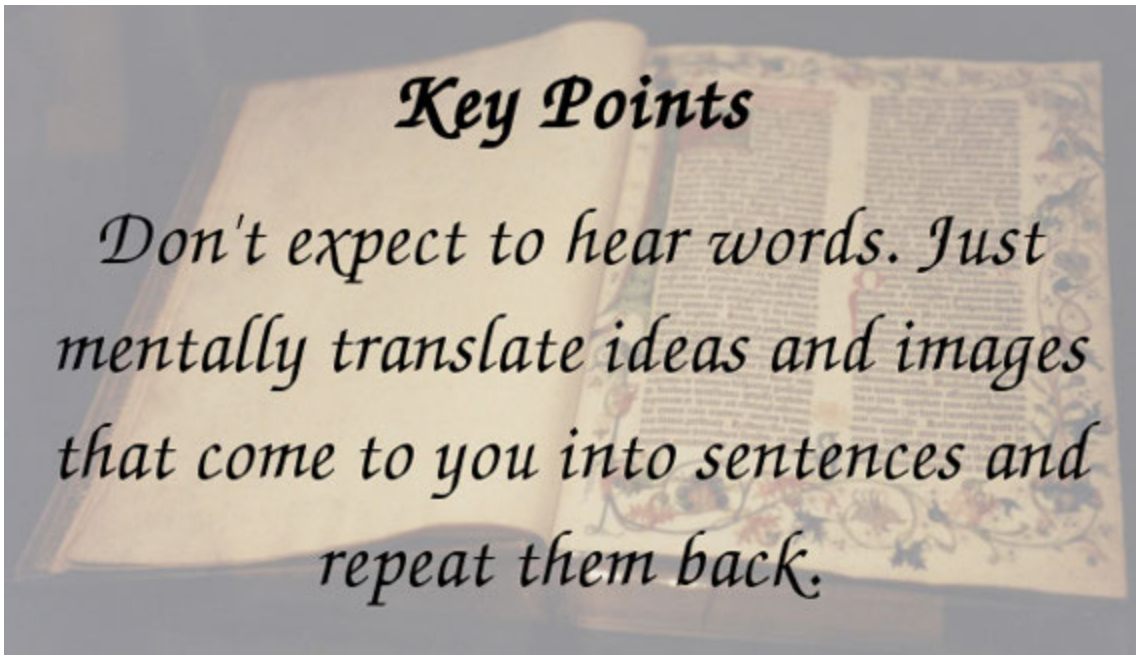
The first thing that came to mind was, “You should follow your own path that leads you to God. ”Well, it wasn't really the first thing. It was the first thing that popped into my mind that wasn't “noise.” I discarded the mental chatter like “this is stupid; I'm hungry; why is this bus taking so long; wow, look at that brunette” and mentally “kept” thoughts that seemed a bit out of place: “follow, paths, God.”

Just for fun, I asked the same question a few more times, making up more answers. “We should spread God’s love to others we meet. We should gather the seeds of wisdom and treasure them. We should spread messages of hope, learn the lessons we came here for, and we should pray for guidance. We should be tolerant. We should follow our hearts. Wow, look at that brunette. ”(Whoops, concentration was not my strongest attribute at the time.)

Again, I just picked out the stray thoughts: “love, meet, gather, seeds, wisdom, treasure,” and so on, and morphed them into sentences.


Tips and Tricks
Develop a protocol question to establish communications with your inner voice. Or use: "What is love?"
Don't talk to your inner voice while driving until you've mastered it.
Ignore the mental "noise."

When I say I “kept” the thoughts, what I really mean is that I held onto them longer and restated them quietly to myself: I reinforced them by repeating them to myself. Perhaps it's more accurate to say that I got a series of thoughts (ideas) and images (nouns) strung together and had to mentally reformulate them into proper sentences, adding all the necessary verbs, pronouns, and syntax.


Key Points
Don't expect to hear words. Just mentally translate ideas and images that come to you into sentences and repeat them back.

I noticed that, unlike the previous night, the messages were getting slightly longer and a bit more refined: less like me and more like some kind of inspirational book. All I had to do is keep my mind quiet and still and let the thoughts flow. I had to quiet down the mental noise in my mind for a second and wait for the images to appear, and then I could translate them into sentences.

As a test, I went back to my previous question, “Do power and money really corrupt?”

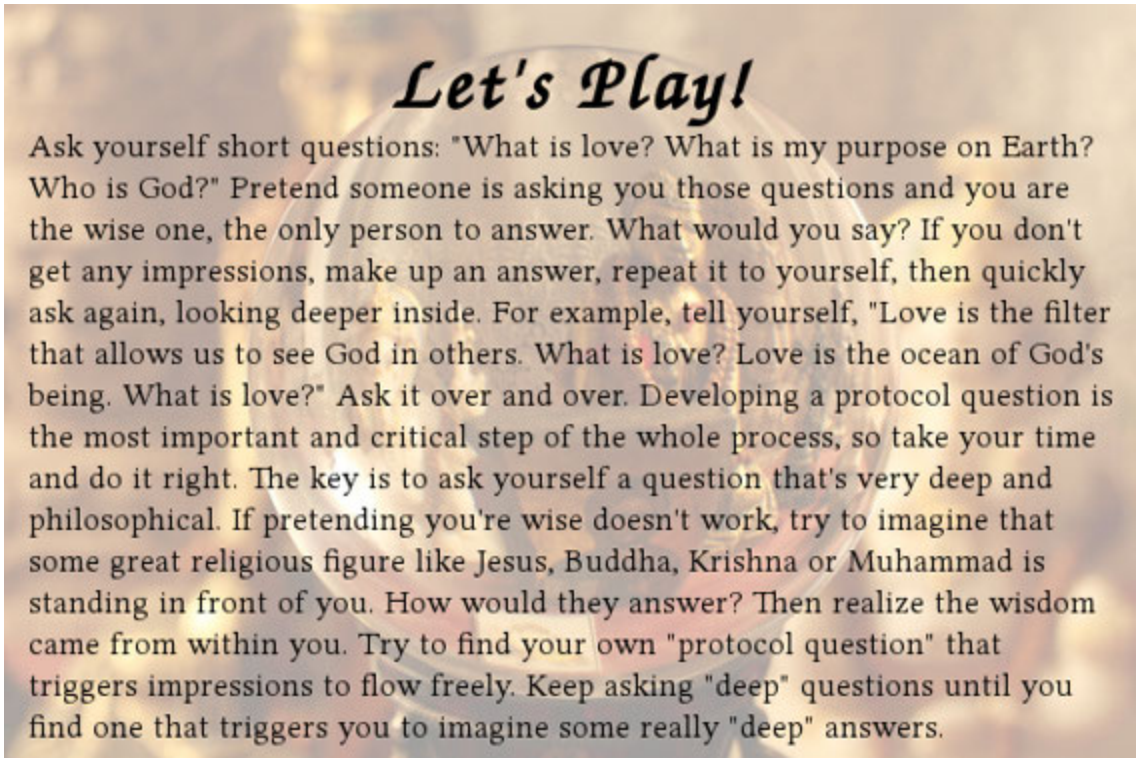
I “made up” an answer that went like this: “Power and money are not evil by themselves. Jesus said that the root of all evil was the loveof money, not money itself. The problems arise when you get distracted by worldly things like power or money. These are tools, nothing more.”

My thoughts went back to the mountain climber in the Himalayas. What if he wanted an example? Rather than dreaming up words to say, I conjured

up an image of a gun. The image of the gun dissolved and melted into a bunch of garden tools: rakes, trowels, thatchers. Then a farmer was using the tools to garden. Then he stepped on a rake and it smacked him in the head. Translation: “Like guns, power and money are man-made tools that can help or harm, depending on how you use them.”

The image of the tools disappeared and I made up a sentence to reflect what I felt. “The things aren't important. What you do with them and what you learn from them are more important than the things themselves. And who you are inside is more important than what you do with them or what you learn from them.”

I noticed there was a certain maturity, a feeling that accompanied the messages I had pulled out of thin air. I was eighteen years old, a geeky computer nerd who liked rowdy music. Not exactly the epitome of wisdom.


Let's Play!
Ask yourself short questions: "What is love? What is my purpose on Earth? Who is God?" Pretend someone is asking you those questions and you are the wise one, the only person to answer. What would you say? If you don't get any impressions, make up an answer, repeat it to yourself, then quickly ask again, looking deeper inside. For example, tell yourself, "Love is the filter that allows us to see God in others. What is love? Love is the ocean of God's being. What is love?" Ask it over and over. Developing a protocol question is the most important and critical step of the whole process, so take your time and do it right. The key is to ask yourself a question that's very deep and philosophical. If pretending you're wise doesn't work, try to imagine that some great religious figure like Jesus, Buddha, Krishna or Muhammad is standing in front of you. How would they answer? Then realize the wisdom came from within you. Try to find your own "protocol question" that triggers impressions to flow freely. Keep asking "deep" questions until you find one that triggers you to imagine some really "deep" answers.

Musical Interlude #1

Music that switches ears

One of my goals is to help you increase your psychic sensitivity and awareness. To that end, I'm including several exercises.

Yeah, I know. You're expecting a bunch of boring, complicated or recycled exercises and you have no intention of doing them. My exercises are different. They're quick, easy and fun. Half of them are "psychic development" visualization exercises and half are meditations done to music. Not meditation music, but rock and roll (I'll explain why later).

I developed these exercises by trial and error, finding out what works (increases my psychic awareness) and what doesn't. These are the ones that work.

This first exercise is a musical meditation.

Robert Monroe, an Out-of-Body Experience legend and founder of the Monroe Institute, discovered that psychic abilities are enhanced if a person listens to two separate uniform tones, one in each ear, through headphones. In other words, each ear hears its own unique tone. If the tones are slightly different, a musical "beat" is artificially perceived by the brain. In science, this is called a binaural beat. Monroe discovered that if you listen to

binaural beats involving certain tones, it causes the two hemispheres of the brain to synchronize and work in harmony.

Based on years of experimentation, Monroe developed a method of inducing altered states of consciousness involving binaural beats. He patented the technology and called it “hemi-sync,” short for brain hemisphere synchronization. Since then, the Monroe Institute has sold thousands of tapes, CDs and workshops based on this concept. The key is that you have to listen to the sounds with headphones so that each ear hears a different tone.

I've taken Monroe's concept a step further. Back in the 1980s I had to wear headphones just to keep my parents from yelling at me for playing my favorite rock music too loud. I started to have sporadic psychic experiences: taking the words out of people’s mouths or anticipating what would play next on the radio. Some days I seemed to be more “psychic” than others, and I tried to figure out what was the difference between “on” and “off” days. Eventually I made an important correlation: I found that my psychic sensitivity increased on days when I listened to songs where my left ear heard different music than my right ear. The affect was even more pronounced when the music bounced back and forth from ear to ear.

For that reason, you should always do the musical exercises while wearing headphones. It's also best (but not mandatory) to listen with your eyes closed.

In my experience, it doesn't matter if the music is fast or slow, raucous or mellow. It only matters that the music moves from one ear to the other and your brain interprets the two channels as one signal. Psychic sensitivity seems to be increased more if you try to focus your attention on the aspects

of the music that actually seem to move. In other words, follow it with your mind.

Although most people don't realize it, this concept in music was popular several years ago. Many of my favorite rock bands created a lot of music that switched from ear to ear. There was even a weekly radio show in Minneapolis dedicated to music made for headphones.

You may not like my taste in music, so feel free to use any music that switches ears.

Here are a few of the songs I've found that move the music around from ear to ear or have different instruments playing in each ear:

“Astral Traveller,” “Yours Is No Disgrace,” “Starship Trooper,” “South Side of the Sky,” “The Ancient: Giants Under the Sun,” “Ritual: Nous Sommes du Soleil” and “Face to Face” by Yes.

“Save All Your Love” by Jon Anderson (he was the lead singer for Yes).

“Merlin the Magician” by Rick Wakeman (he was the keyboardist for Yes).

“Miracles Out of Nowhere,” “The Spider” and “Hopelessly Human” by Kansas.

“Lights” and “Too Much Time on My Hands” by Styx.

“One of These Days” by Pink Floyd.

“Dreamboat Annie,” “Nada One” and “Mistral Wind” by Heart.

“The Whale” by Electric Light Orchestra.

“Maybe I'm a Leo” and other songs on the CD “Machine Head” by Deep Purple.

“Fever” by Judas Priest.

Listen to some or all of these songs through headphones, with your eyes closed, and let your attention follow the aspects of the music that are moving. See how many of these moving musical threads you can follow with your attention.

I used to spend many hours doing this, so don't sell this technique short. Listen to the songs multiple times so that you become familiar with the movement of the music.

Chapter 3

“Take the water to the mountain

Take the river to the sea

Let the forest be salvation

Long before it needs to be”

--Yes, “Take The Water To The Mountain”

Forest Metaphors

Minnesota has more than thirteen thousand lakes and dozens of rivers, including the mighty Mississippi. With all that water, there is abundant wildlife and many parks with trails, even within the Minneapolis city limits. Periodically, when life gets too hectic, I'll retreat to one of those parks and go hiking on one of the trails.

One day I went to a park by the Mississippi river and started walking in the woods. After being cooped up indoors all winter, hiding from the cold, I needed to get out into nature. The normal January cold snap had finally ended and it had warmed up to a nice balmy +10Fº. It's funny how +10Fº can feel warm after you've endured -20Fº for a week.

As I walked I thought about something I had “made up” the last time I played the Wisdom Game. I had said, “We should follow our own paths that

lead us to God. ” Now that I really was on a park trail, I thought about how the real thing—the trail—could be a metaphor for something deeper, a spiritual concept. I decided to play the game again and this time incorporate what I saw as metaphors. It struck me as an easy way to “make up” wisdom.

As I walked I pretended I was wise and asked myself my protocol question. “What is love?” Then I looked around for physical things I could use in my wisdom. I didn't see anything I could use for an answer, so I literally made one up out of thin air.

“Love is the very air you breathe.”

The winter air was cold in my lungs and I walked briskly to get warm. I said to myself, “The coldness you feel now helps you to appreciate the warmth of summer.”

As I walked along the path I remembered an incident last June when I had walked along the same path and had come across two baby raccoons on the trail. Most raccoons would avoid humans and bolt into the forest, but these two cuties were too young and innocent to be afraid. I had wondered if their mother would later scold them for being reckless.

I had found my first forest metaphor. I said to myself, “Animals are not afraid of people with deep inner wisdom. Be as open as the forest itself and as innocent as the babies of the forest.”

I kept walking, looking for more metaphors. A wise man would be able to use anything around him as wisdom, I thought. The forest didn't have many features, so I had to make my mind quiet and stretch my imagination. Being winter, the trees had no leaves, so there was nothing to block the sunlight. Most winter days in Minnesota are cloudy but on this day the sun shone brightly and the light hit my face. It felt good. I said to myself, “The sunlight of God's love is always shining upon you, even on cloudy days.”

As I walked across a bridge that spanned a frozen creek, I said to myself, “The bridge of your eternal spirit will sustain and support you when times are tough and the world seems cold.”

I kept walking and eventually came to a place where the path was blocked. There was a small plastic fence blocking the trail, and a sign that said “Trail closed.” I stopped to consider whether I should turn back or hop the fence and keep going. Still looking for spiritual metaphors for my wisdom game, I said to myself, “There are many barriers to spiritual progress. Only the bravest and most spiritual will ignore the signs and keep walking.”

A trail of footprints in the snow led around the fence past the sign. At the risk of needing to backtrack I decided to keep going. I said to myself, “Your spiritual path may be difficult, but remember: you are never alone. Many have walked the path before you and safely found their way. The footprints you leave behind will help guide the travelers behind you.”

Some parts of the trail went through moist, swampy areas of the forest, and the park board had constructed a wooden walkway for hikers. Of course, in the winter it was all frozen, so there was no danger of getting my boots wet. After hiking a few minutes I found out why the park board had closed the trail: some of the boards on the foot path were badly broken. I had to look down to avoid them and keep from tripping. I said to myself, “The wise man keeps his head down in humility and watches his footsteps. The path isn't always clear and unobstructed. There are pitfalls and sometimes we stumble and lose our footing, but it's all part of God's plan.”

I thought about how the park board would likely send a crew out to replace the broken boards in the spring. Beyond the broken boards, the path was walkable again. I said to myself, “Your spiritual path will be made whole. If you remain steadfast, you will find that the path becomes clear down the road.”

I hiked a while longer. Suddenly there was a rustling in the woods. Just ahead a big deer jumped away from the path and retreated into the forest. It was a young doe and it stood at a safe distance and watched in silence as I walked by. I said to myself, “Always live in harmony with nature. The deer lives in inner silence following its own spiritual path. We all have spiritual paths to follow, even the animals.”

I ran out of things to make into spiritual metaphors, so I reached even deeper inside myself. I looked at the snow on the forest floor and said to myself, “Things look cold and barren now, but don't be discouraged. Beneath the snow the entire forest is alive and ready to burst forth with new life when spring arrives. What you see is the rest and repose of Mother Nature.”

After a while the trail led me back to where I started at the trail head. I said to myself, “Keep following your spiritual path and it will lead you back to the source. To God.”

I had enjoyed my walk through the forest and had learned another trick: I could turn the things around me into metaphors of spirituality. It's easier to find wisdom if you can use the things around you as triggers.

Let's Play!
Metaphor Walk
Find a place of solitude (like a park or forest) and walk through it. As you see things around you, "make up" wisdom involving the things you see. Visualize the connection between what you see and your answer.

Chapter 4

“Well Me, it's nice talking to myself;

A credit to dementia”

--Megadeth, “Sweating Bullets”

The Twilight Zone

A few days later, as I walked across the Washington Avenue bridge to my class on the East Bank of the University, I felt conflicted. I was raised as a devout Catholic but my out-of-body experiences inevitably made me question my religion. I wasn’t quite sure if the church would view my OBEs as a sign of insanity or that I was in league with Satan. All I knew was that the priest at Saint Clement's was kind of creepy, so I didn’t want to ask him. I couldn't ask my family or friends either, because they'd think I'd gone mad. With no one else to talk to, I turned my attention within. I used my protocol question to initiate communications, then began asking myself deeper questions. I dove right in with “Why did Jesus have to die so young?”

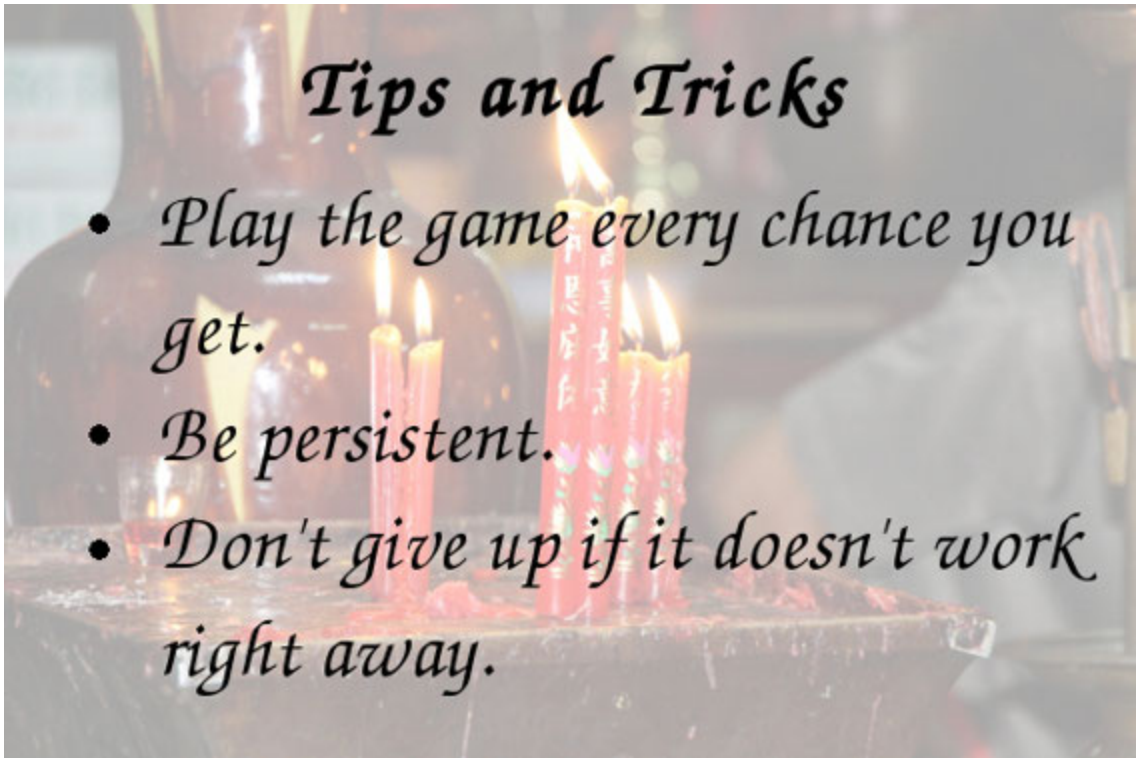
I made up the answer “To make the most impact with his ministry.”

Interesting. But wasn't it presumptuous—even arrogant—of me to “make up” something about Jesus? I'm not a Theologian, priest or religious scholar. In fact, I hadn't even read the Bible at that point in my life. I was

talking about someone who lived two thousand years ago; I couldn't know much about him other than what I'd heard in church. Still, it was the first thing that came into my mind. I decided to play it safer with the next question.

“Why is there so much suffering in the world?”

“Because this is a learning place. It is the school of hard knocks and kids sometimes get hurt on the playground. We fall down and get bruised and scraped. We learn by our mistakes, then we get up, dust ourselves off, and try again. Sometimes pain is necessary for spiritual growth.”

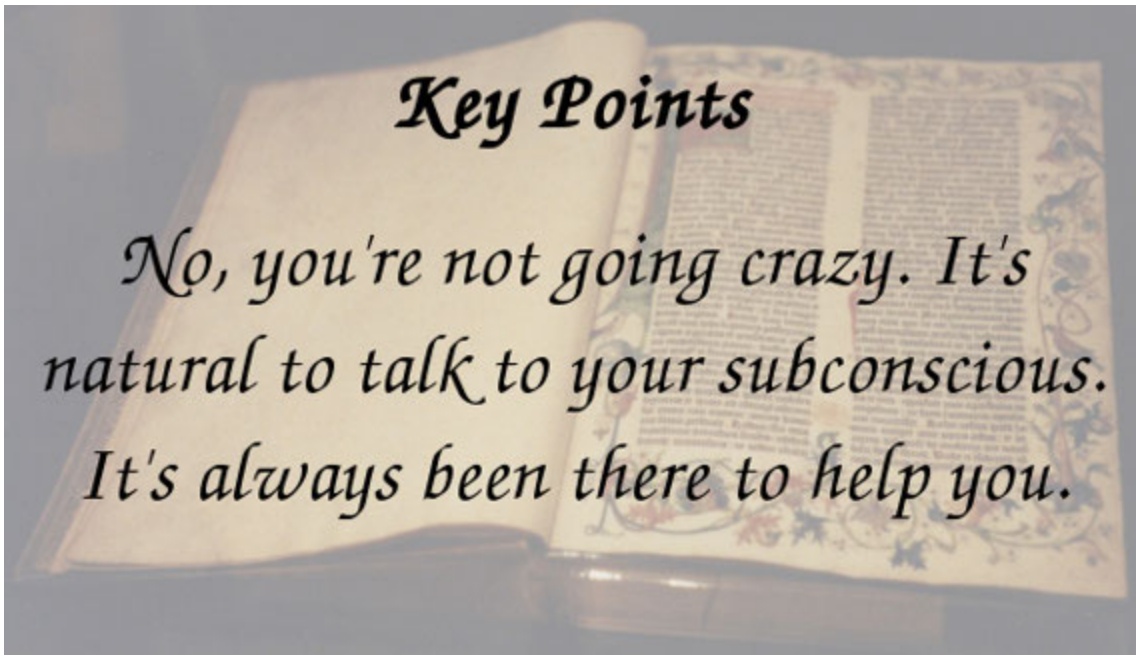


It felt odd—even a little crazy—to play the wisdom game. It was like letting my mind wander, but with a chosen direction rather than aimlessly. I

was plucking images from my subconscious and forming them into sentences.

I was starting to doubt if my Catholicism had a framework big enough to include my OBEs, but what religion did? I thought about the billions of people in the world and the various paths they follow. Wasn't it presumptuous to assume mine was the correct path? “What is the best religion to follow?” I asked myself.

I answered, “Although the destination may be the same, we all must follow our own individual paths. For we all have our individual feet and they all start out in unique locations. Each path is paved and decorated by God along the way.”



Most computer programmers have a quirky sense of humor, and I'm no exception. In fact, mine is probably more quirky than many of my colleagues, and was undoubtedly influenced by too many Marx Brothers

movies and Tom and Jerry cartoons when I was a kid. Or maybe it was the "Doctor Demento" radio show that championed very silly songs. So after I had "made up" my answer about God paving our paths, my mind conjured up an image not unlike Michelangelo's painting of God on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel: a grandfatherly old man with a long white beard. But in my version God was wearing an orange street paver's jumpsuit and was pouring asphalt onto a road and smoothing it over with a decorative golden rake. I almost giggled aloud at the thought.

My life, complete with OBEs, was indeed strange. If people only knew how bizarre this all was, they'd probably measure me for a straitjacket. Then again, it was just a game, right? It didn't mean anything; who cares what flights of fancy run through my mind.

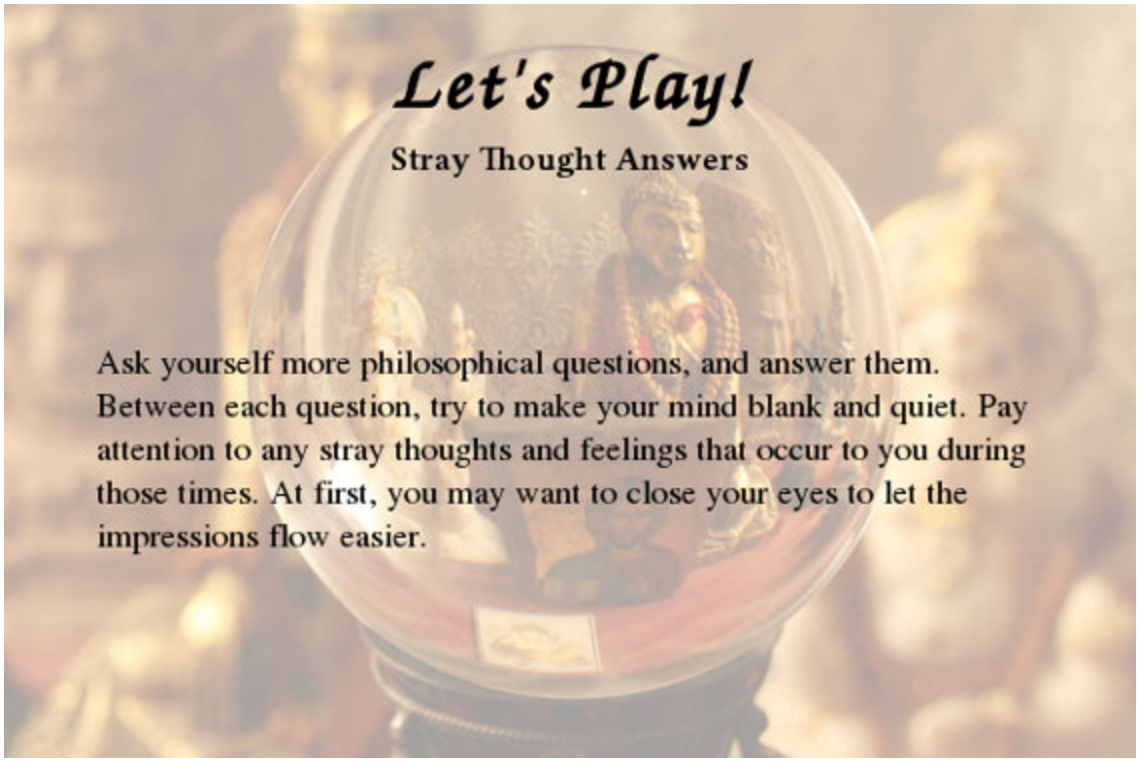
Then I imagined the opening music to The Twilight Zone. There was a signpost standing behind my orange-clad image of God, and it said, "Speed bump ahead." Next to the sign, I imagined Rod Serling standing there in his traditional black suit, saying, "On the signpost up ahead: your next stop: the Twilight Zone!" I chuckled to myself.

Then I wondered: did the images of God and Rod Serling really come from my own twisted imagination, or was it just a side-effect of the wisdom game? After all, I had been playing the game when these silly thoughts had popped into my head. In retrospect, this was probably the first sign that my inner voice had a sense of humor.

As part of the game, I had learned to pause quietly for a few seconds between questions in order to allow an answer to come. And in that blank space between my thoughts, I found myself making up another answer,

even if the question was unasked. I told myself with that same uncharacteristic maturity, “Don't worry; you're not going crazy.”

That's when I realized something odd had just happened. I received what felt like an unsolicited answer. And it wasn't “wisdom” at all. It was more like conversation.


Let's Play!
Stray Thought Answers
Ask yourself more philosophical questions, and answer them. Between each question, try to make your mind blank and quiet. Pay attention to any stray thoughts and feelings that occur to you during those times. At first, you may want to close your eyes to let the impressions flow easier.

Psychic Sensitivity Exercise #1

Sensitivity Expanding

When I first started having out-of-body experiences, I spent a lot of time working to achieve them by meditating, wandering the edge of sleep and inducing altered states of consciousness. Many of my OBE attempts involved visualization. After years of trial and error, I figured out that some of these visualization exercises made me more “psychic” for some reason. For a few days after the exercises, I'd get flashes of the future, take the words out of people's mouths and know things I wouldn't ordinarily know, like who was on the phone before answering.

Once I made that connection, I began to use it to my advantage: I would perform these exercises to increase my awareness whenever I felt psychically insensitive. In many cases, I have no idea why the exercises work. They may not work for everyone, so don't get discouraged if you don't see immediate results. I just know they worked for me.

Here's the first exercise to help you increase your psychic sensitivity.

Get into a comfortable position, close your eyes and meditate. First, just try to feel your surroundings: be aware of what is near you. Imagine that your awareness is a bubble that surrounds your body.

Next, pretend you are expanding your awareness outward away from you, as if your bubble is getting bigger until you can feel the walls of the room and everything inside it.

Imagine the bubble of awareness expanding outward until it touches the closest house or apartment. Push the bubble outward so that it encompasses your entire house or apartment and the other house or apartment. Since you are at the center of the bubble, it may touch several houses at once. Try to imagine what the people inside the bubble are doing and what they're feeling inside those houses. Are some of them bored? Are some fighting? Are some asleep? Do you feel pets and other animals inside your bubble of awareness?

Imagine the bubble of awareness expanding further and further away from you, until you pretend to “feel” for several city blocks in all directions. Maybe the consciousness of that many people and their scattered random thoughts will remind you of a noisy room.

Next, push the bubble of awareness out until it encompasses your entire city or community. When you're comfortable with that, expand it even more until it encompasses the entire country.

Push the bubble outward as far as you feel comfortable.

If you want, it can encompass the whole world, the solar system, the galaxy or the universe.

This exercise can help you expand your consciousness and make you more open to psychic impressions from nearby people and places.

Chapter 5

“You don't have to be old to be wise.”

--Judas Priest, “You Don't Have to Be Old to Be Wise.”

Say Something Wise

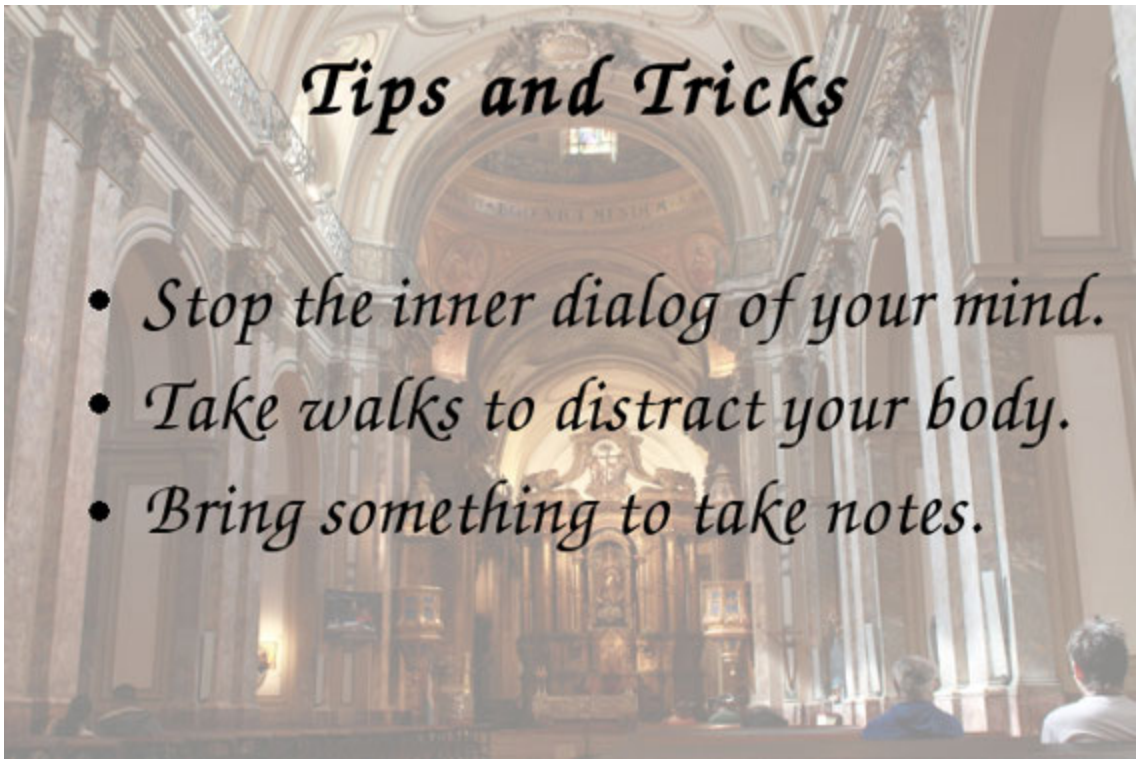
The next several days I played the wisdom game whenever I had free time, which was usually when I rode the bus to and from school. I also played the game while walking to my classes. I learned that I got answers quicker if I followed a few simple rules.

First, I asked “What is love” to establish the communications protocol. Then I'd “make up” a wise answer off the top of my head. That got the words—my creative juices—flowing.

Second, I needed to keep my mind quiet for just a few seconds after I asked the question: I had to provide enough of a pause in the mental action to allow something to pop into my head. The wisdom that occurred to me was like a whisper and my ordinary thoughts were relatively very noisy. You can only notice a ripple on a pond that is still and calm, not in the middle of the raging seas.

Although I hadn't yet read his books, this was similar to a powerful technique taught by Carlos Castaneda: temporarily stop the inner dialogue, your running inner commentary about life.

Third, the information seemed to flow better when I walked. Sometimes I took walks just to play the game. In the summer, I used to take walks down at the parks on the shores of the Mississippi river that ran through the campus. In the winter, I explored the labyrinth of interconnected corridors, stairways and halls that ran underneath the University hospitals and research labs.



I asked myself hundreds of questions. At first I focused on guru-type "meaning of life" questions. Since I was either on the bus or walking to class, I rarely wrote it down. I wish I had documented more (as I did with my OBEs) so I didn't have to rely upon my admittedly flawed memory.

It took weeks, but eventually I ran out of philosophical questions. At first I was sad: I liked pretending I was wise. Then I had an idea how to keep the game going. Instead of asking a specific question, after asking the protocol question, “What is love?” I'd ask myself to “say something wise.”

“Love is the greatest of gifts. It blesses and honors both the giver and the receiver.”

Communication established. “Say something else wise.”

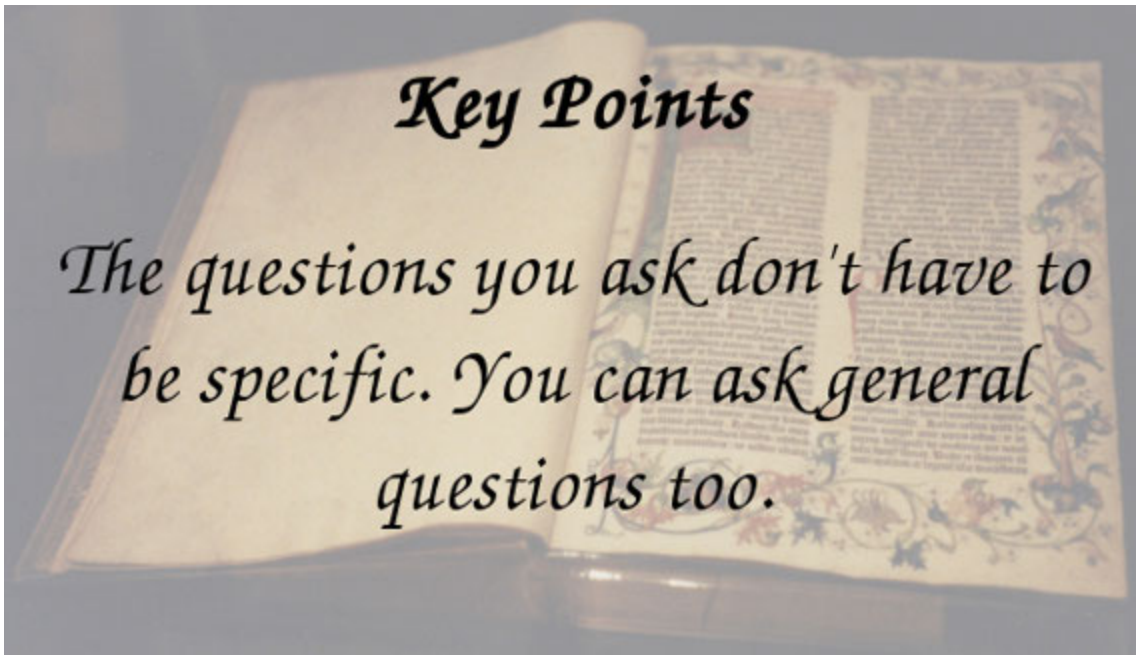
“Perfect love is never selfish. It's wrong not to love at all. It is okay to love someone and selfishly desire their love. It is better to love someone, and desire to give them your love, asking nothing in return. It is best to love All That Is unselfishly and recognize everything as a part of that creation, including your loved one and yourself.”

Not bad, I thought. Let’s do it again. “Say something wise.”

“Learn from all people, for they are your brothers and sisters. Learn from infants, for they don't have your biases. Learn from all things, for everything is a creation of God. Learn from the fish in the stream: They do not fight the current nor thrash about the rocks. They live in harmony, flowing with the stream, following its natural course.”

I felt like a child who had been locked overnight in a fortune cookie factory. Or maybe a kid bugging his parents for attention, asking endless questions. The supply of answers seemed endless.

“Cherish each moment, for it is a sacred gift given to you by God and you are only given a limited number of them.”



Okay, that definitely didn't sound like me at all. Back then I was still an impatient teenager. Contrary to the wisdom I gave to myself, time couldn't go fast enough for me. I felt trapped and bored in college, and I couldn't wait for adult life to begin. I asked again.

“Cherish each person in your life, for they are gifts given to you by God.”

Would it ever get tired of the same question the way a parent would? If I had played this game with my mom instead of myself, she would have shooed me away a long time ago. I kept going. “Say something wise.”

“A most powerful source of magic is to believe in yourself. One of the biggest wastes in this life is not believing in yourself.”

I wondered if my inspiration would eventually run out. Or if I should get a job in the Hallmark inspirational card factory. I was on a roll so I kept going. “Say something wise.”

“Each moment of your life bears an important lesson. You can choose to pay attention or to ignore it. Make your choices in life count.”

I was amazed at its patience with me, repeatedly asking the same annoying question.

“It is you, not I, who needs to learn patience.”

Well, now, that was odd. Not only had it answered a question I hadn't asked, it had also acknowledged that it was somehow different from me. Yet at the same time, I still felt like I was making up the answers. Wasn't I?

The wisdom game was great fun but I was careful not to share my new-found wisdom with anyone. If I had, although I may not have been wise at all, I could still access the information just the same and no one could ever have told the difference. In a way I felt like a cheater.

Let's Play!
Say Something Wise
Instead of asking yourself a specific philosophical question, ask yourself to "Say something wise." Rinse and repeat. See what creative answers you can come up with.

Chapter 6

“For everything you seek is waiting patiently within

And growing old is only going back to where you've been”

--Kansas, “Incomudro: Hymn to the Atman”

What's Today's Lesson?

As I mentioned earlier, apart from my studies in computer science, the main interest in my life was out-of-body experiences. I read every book on the subject and tried everything to induce them. I wasn't born with any natural OBE talent or ability so I had to work very hard to train my mind, much as an athlete trains his or her body for competition.

Since your subconscious mind can help achieve the OBE state, part of my training included programming my subconscious. There are several ways to do that.

I tried conventional hypnosis using both amateur and professional hypnotists, but soon found out that I'm resistant to it. I tried OBE hypnosis tapes, but they didn’t work either. I even tried self-hypnosis but that also failed. So I explored other ways to program my subconscious.

One method I learned about is using affirmations. Affirmations are messages and suggestions you send to yourself (your subconscious) to help bring about change. Affirmations are like a form of indirect hypnosis: they program your subconscious and convince it “Oh, that's my goal. That's what I should be doing.”

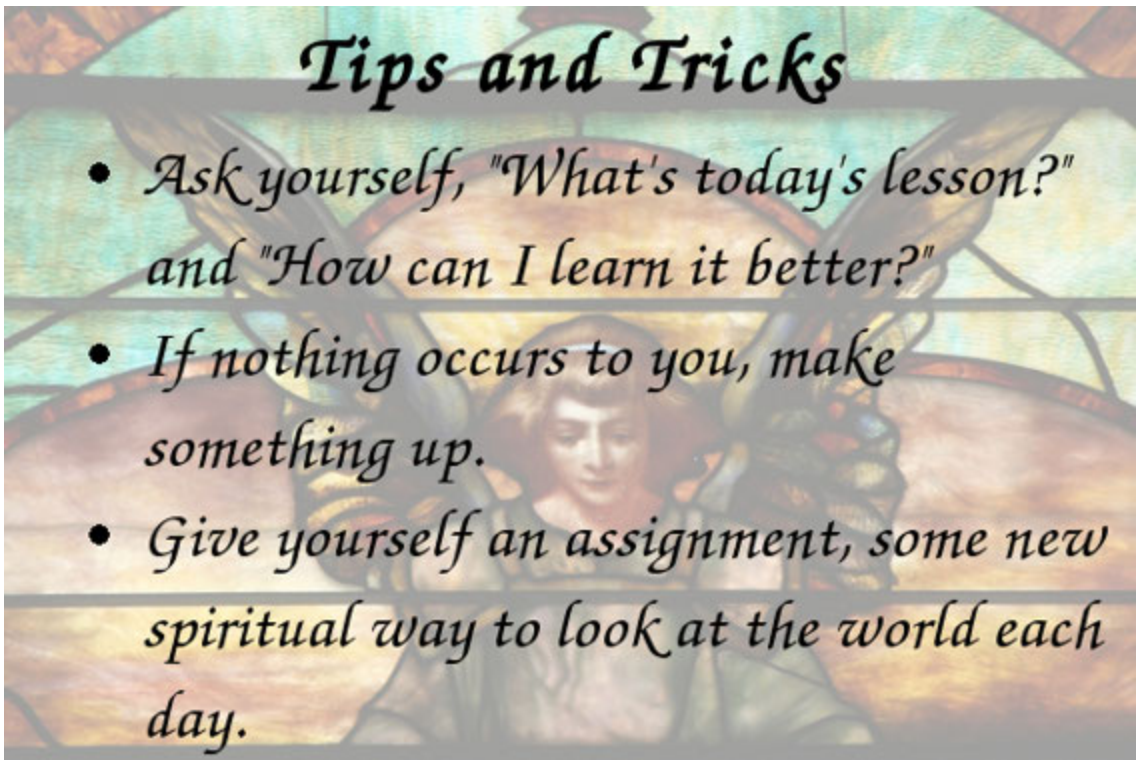
So every morning I'd wake up and give myself one or two affirmations. At first they were all OBE-related: “I can easily leave my body,” or “I'm loose from my body.” Later, I expanded their scope: “This is a great day,” or “I'm closer to God,” and those suggestions greatly enriched my life.

Tips and Tricks
• Use positive, daily affirmations like "I pay attention to my inner voice."
• Affirmations can improve all of your life, not just inner voice.
• Try the game when you first wake up.

At the same time I started to incorporate the wisdom game into all aspects of my life, not just on the bus. So naturally I started to use affirmations like, “I pay more attention to my inner voice,” “My conscious mind is open to subconscious messages.” The affirmations made my inner voice communication a lot easier. I paused more often for moments of silent

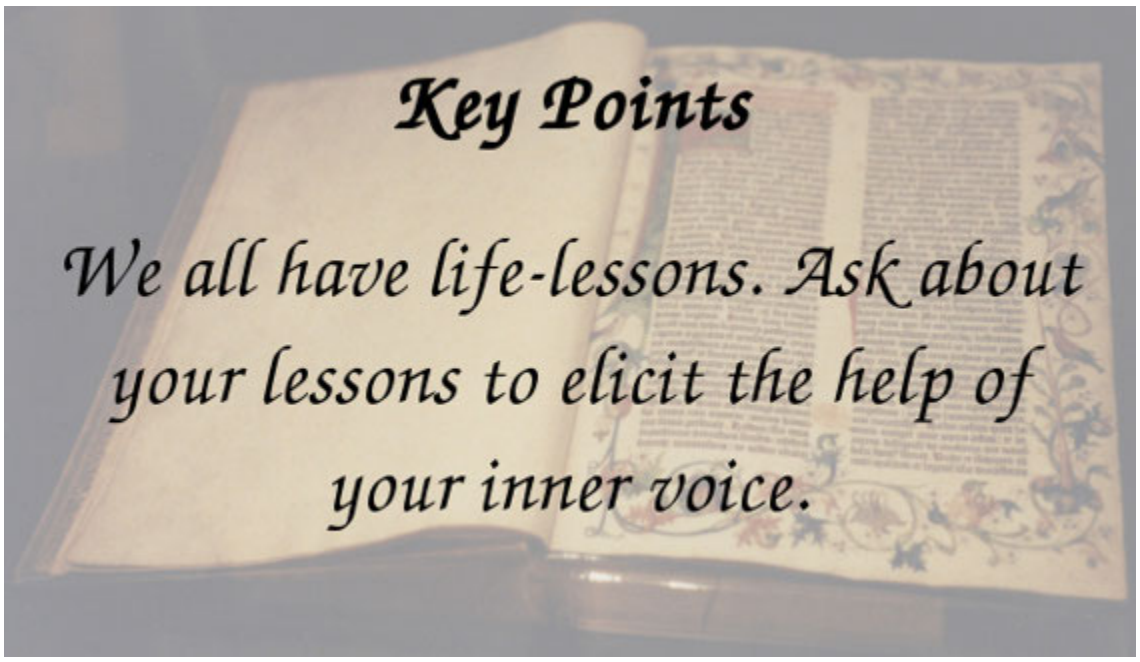
contemplation and introspection. My inner voice met me halfway and started communicating more often.

One morning I woke up to the alarm clock, got out of bed and shuffled off to the bathroom. Due to my OBE training, I had conditioned myself to cross the boundary between waking and sleeping as slowly as possible, and so I woke up very slowly. My mind was still groggy and on a whim, I decided to forgo my normal affirmations and tried the wisdom game instead.


Tips and Tricks
• Ask yourself, "What's today's lesson?" and "How can I learn it better?"
• If nothing occurs to you, make something up.
• Give yourself an assignment, some new spiritual way to look at the world each day.

After initiating the protocol, I asked my first question, a repeat: “Why are we here?” Surprisingly, the communication channel was much stronger than normal. Impressions from my inner voice came very easily and quickly. I had accidentally stumbled on another trick of the trade: When you first get up in the morning, you're closer to being unconscious and therefore it's easier to communicate with your subconscious. Your mind is less scattered. There's less noise and clutter in your mind to distort the messages. It said:

“Most people are born into this life to accomplish a set of goals and life-lessons. Before they're born, people plan out the major milestones of their life and the lessons they want to learn. There are greater and lesser life-lessons. Greater life-lessons are recurring themes that repeat to teach you about some aspect of life. Lesser life-lessons are the drops of wisdom you pick up along the way; the small daily reminders that most people ignore throughout the day.”



I was about to ask another question, but it continued. “The more you take your life-lessons to heart, the faster you will grow spiritually and the smoother your life will run. If you're going down the wrong path, you’re going to hit more bumps in the road. Life will seem to fight you. Strive to realize your life-lessons and learn them well.”

I asked, “Okay, so what is my 'greater' life-lesson?”

“You're learning about love and all its aspects.”

I hesitated, then thought, “That's kind of generic, isn't it? I mean, love is a pretty big category.”

It replied, “In fact, love is the only category. Most people living today are learning about love. All other lessons are variations on love.”

“What about my 'lesser' life-lesson?”

“That changes from day to day. Sometimes it may change several times a day.”

I wanted a concrete example. “Okay, so what's today's lesson?”

“Today's lesson is loving someone, regardless of who they are. Whenever you see anyone today, feel love for them, regardless of whether or not you even know them. When you see a stranger on the street, look into their eyes and inwardly say, 'I love you.' For as God loves all people, all animals and all things unconditionally, so you should strive to love them as well.”

I decided to permanently add this new aspect to my game: every morning, as I was getting ready for school, I would ask my inner voice for a new lesson for the day. Then, throughout the day, I would periodically recall my

daily lesson and try to see how it applied to the situations in which I found myself.

As time went on, I started to ask myself more frequently if I was living that day according to the lesson. I'd think about the lesson several times throughout the day. As time went on, I decreased the amount of time between these check-ins.

This periodic checking, or “lesson touchstone” was a precursor to the “running question mark” that I developed later.

Sometimes the lesson touchstone seemed to flow both directions: Throughout the day, whenever I got frustrated, angry or impatient, I'd get a gentle “mental poke” from my inner voice; a subtle reminder to remember the day's lesson. For example, a tiny voice inside would mentally jab its elbow into my ribs and remind me, “Love them, regardless.”

Let's Play!
Affirmations
Affirmations are most effective as give-and-take agreements with yourself. State what you want, not what you don't. Don't scold yourself for doing something wrong. Here are some examples: I pay attention to my lessons and in return, my inner voice gives me guidance and psychic information. My inner voice speaks clearly to me. I am psychic. I know the Universe will respond to my needs and desires quickly and joyously. In return, I promise to follow my impulses, act on my intuition, share my knowledge and wisdom, spread my love, and cooperate with my higher self.

Musical Interlude #2

“Echoes” by Pink Floyd

The song “Echoes” by Pink Floyd is another good song for increasing psychic awareness. It's a little “dark” and more otherworldly than some of the other musical meditations, but I still love it for the way it induces a trance.

Again, it's not meditation music in the traditional sense. Think of it as trance-music.

I'll warn you up front: There are lots of very weird sound effects—spooky noises, wind blowing, crows cawing—so be aware of that. It's still worth it for the trance it can induce.

Like the other songs I've mentioned, listen to it under headphones with your eyes closed and try to follow the musical parts as they move. Let it guide you into a deep trance.

When the song is over, you may feel a little bit out of it, but that's okay.

Chapter 7

“The mariner's bound to tell of his story,

To tell his tale wherever he goes,

To teach God's word by his own example,

That we must love all things that God made”

--Iron Maiden, “Rime of the Ancient Mariner”

GIGO

Do you pay attention to the lyrics of the songs you hear? Do you know them by heart? I've got thousands of song lyrics memorized, and they're not all good.

In November, 1979, the rock band Pink Floyd released one of their most famous and best-selling albums, “The Wall.” It rocketed to #1 and went multi-platinum. Millions of people bought it, including me. I loved it. I listened to it every chance I got for a full year. But several months later I noticed something very odd: I was depressed. I'm normally a very happy, upbeat guy, so it was very unusual. I decided to figure out why. By that time, introspection and self-examination were familiar territory, so I dove right in.

The more I examined the situation, the more I realized that there was a direct link between my depression and my listening to “The Wall.” The lyrics were depressing.

I learned some very important lessons: without knowing it, by listening to depressing music, I was programming my subconscious and it was making me depressed. I knew that people could program their minds to a certain degree with hypnosis and affirmations, but I didn't realize the impact music had. It was a revelation.

I'm a computer programmer and a logical thinker by trade, so it was natural to assume the converse might also be true: if negative music can affect me negatively, then positive music can affect me positively. It was a hypothesis worth testing.

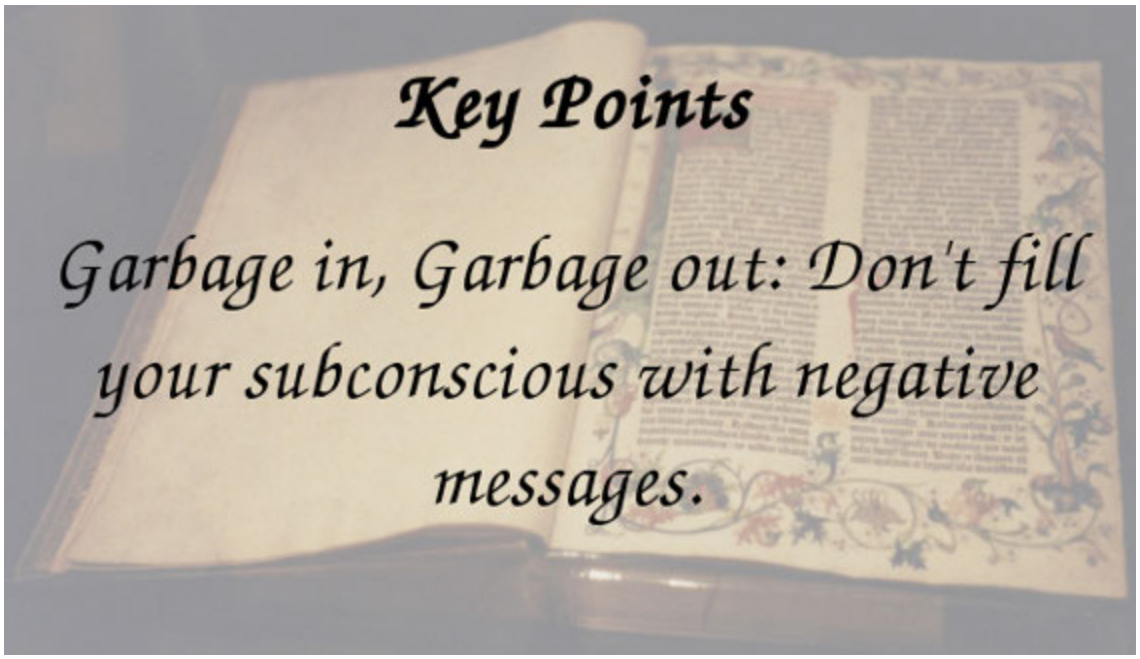
As much as I loved and cherished “The Wall,” I forced myself to stop listening to it for my own good. Instead I listened to music with positive messages and music that brought psychic sensitivity to mind. It worked. I had found another way to communicate with my subconscious.

Some time later, I ran into an old buddy at the grocery store and we started talking about music. He was a fan of Pink Floyd and touted their virtues. I told him that I enjoyed their music, but I had to force myself to stop listening because their lyrics were too depressing. He tried to convince me that their previous album “Dark Side of the Moon” was not depressing, so I started quoting lyrics: “Shorter of breath and one day closer to death... Balanced on the biggest wave, you race toward an early grave...The lunatic is in my head...” He left convinced.

The moral of this story: be very careful about what you put into your head and the messages you send to yourself.

There's a concept in computer science called “GIGO,” an acronym that stands for “Garbage In, Garbage Out.” It means that if you feed a computer program garbage data, you'll get garbage results. In other words, a computer program is only as good as the data you give it. It doesn't matter how powerful it is if you feed it bad data.

The same goes for your subconscious. Feed it negative messages and it will bring negativity into your life. Feed it positive, uplifting messages and it will make you happier and bring positive things into your life. It's as simple as that.



That doesn't mean you have to restrict yourself to new-age, meditation and elevator music. You're not condemned to listen to Narada, Celtic Woman, David Arkenstone and Loreena McKennitt (all of whom I like) for the rest

of your life. Believe it or not, I love loud, hard, fast, raucous music. My favorite genre is heavy metal, and I even like some death metal. But you've got to be careful not to let it program your subconscious with negativity.

One trick I've learned is listening to music from an optimistic point of view, even if the music is negative. For example, I listen to heavy metal with an extreme sense of humor.

I remember one time I was walking down the hallway of my office building in downtown St. Paul, whistling. My boss saw me and said, “Boy, you're in a good mood today.” I gave her a sly smile and replied, “You don't know what song I'm whistling!” In fact, the song was “Screaming for Vengeance” by Judas Priest. The song's lyrics are decidedly negative: “The world is a manacled place, same old no tomorrow, kicked in the face.” But in my mind, the exaggerated negativity is so absurd that it's funny. It makes me want to giggle.

Often, the violence portrayed in heavy metal serves only to expose the horror for what it is: horrible. I first learned that lesson when I was introduced to the band Iron Maiden. They had violent lyrics like “We oil the jaws of the war machine and feed it with our babies” but I realized that they're really just pointing out that violence is wrong by exposing its ugliness. It's kind of like admitting that there's a problem is the first step in recovery.

Another trick I learned is to “silly-ize” songs by switching out words. You know, like Weird Al Yankovic. For example, for the Judas Priest song “Tyrant” you can replace the words “Captor of humanity” with “Captor of a manatee.” The thought that some unnamed tyrant would want to keep a manatee in a cage makes the whole song laughable. A friend once

suggested I replace the title of a Judas Priest song, Screaming for Vengeance with Screaming for Breakfast.

So when I listen to bloody, violent Manowar songs like “Hail and Kill,” the absolute absurdity and primitiveness of it makes me laugh. That's not to trivialize violence; I simply can't take songs like that seriously. But still, you need to be very careful about how the messages are interpreted by your subconscious.

Tips and Tricks
• Be aware of the music you listen to.
• Put a positive spin on negative music.
• Take negative music for what it is: venting of frustrations.

The good news is that I've found several hard rock and heavy metal bands that give mostly positive, uplifting messages while still presenting all the speed and power: Stratovarius, Dream Theater, Rush, Masterplan, Angel Dust, Avantasia, Edguy, Boston, Kansas, Savatage, Triumph, Styx, Yes and others. If you insist on listening to music that has negative messages, stay aware and pay attention to how it affects you. Make a conscious effort to combat the negativity by mentally distancing yourself from the violent lyrics or bearing in mind the music's deeper messages.

I also recommend countering the negativity by listening to some positive music afterwards to center yourself.

The other good news for metal-heads like me is that wisdom can often be found where you least expect it: even in the lyrics of heavy metal bands (thus, the quotes that start each chapter). The same can be said for negative books, movies, and television shows.

Let's Play!
Messages in Music
Examine the music you listen to and pay attention to how it changes your mood. Try to listen to music with positive, uplifting messages, or at least songs you can put a positive spin on.

Chapter 8

“Love can be seen as the answer,

but nobody bleeds for the dancer”

--Black Sabbath, “Heaven and Hell”

Love

As I got dressed and ready for the day I asked my inner voice, “What's today's lesson?”

I got the image of rainbow-colored eyeglasses molded into the shape of hearts, like something the Beatles would wear. I told myself, “Today, see the world through love-colored glasses, for it is through love that we are saved.”

I liked the analogy of colored glasses; it would be a filter that colored what I saw that day. Seeing the world through the eyes of love sounded challenging; the world can be a trying place. I imagined that Jesus saw the people around him through the eyes of love—even the people who wanted to crucify him for heresy—as he walked through the towns of ancient Israel.

Still, one thing bothered me: My inner voice was always extolling the virtues of love, but was that wise? Was my inner voice sending me messages about love because my subconscious had been programmed by my culture, my religion, my favorite music? When I grew up, almost every song on the radio was about love; it was pervasive.

In Junior High School, I had a friend named Frank who sparked my interest in music by introducing me to The Beatles. For years, it was the only band I listened to and their central message was, “All you need is love.” In high school my musical tastes expanded to the band “Yes” whose lyrics were poetic and also extolled the virtues of love: “Love is the only answer,” they sang. The value of love became ingrained in my psyche.

It wasn't just the music. In the Bible, Jesus gave only two commandments, both of which commanded us to love. His first and greatest commandment was “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” The second was similar: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”—Matthew 22:37-39

But the thought occurred to me: Not everyone would agree with that philosophy. In many countries, for example India, people don't get married because of love; parents still arrange most marriages and love is merely a by-product. And maybe rightfully so: In the United States where most people are Christians and couples marry for love, 50 percent of all marriages result in divorce. Compare that to India where Hinduism is the dominant religion and marriages are arranged: only 1.1 percent of marriages end in divorce.

So maybe this whole “love” thing is overrated. Besides, it was spring and I was nearly nineteen years old; maybe my hormones were just raging.

Plus, if love is really the binding force of the universe and the building blocks of God, shouldn't that be more visible in nature? Why are there so many kinds of animals that don't show any signs of outward affection: all

reptiles, all amphibians, all insects, all the invertebrates, all the fish; none of them show any signs of love—well, at least not that we can see. As a matter of fact, the species that do show signs of love (mammals and birds) are vastly outnumbered by those that don't.

I decided to play the wisdom game and challenge my inner voice on the topic.

It said, “Do you remember reading about near-death experiences?”

“Yes. People usually describe seeing a beautiful white light.”

“The light is described as loving. This is a reflection of the one true reality: love. Love is all there is. We come to this Earth to learn about love. We also come to this Earth to learn about ourselves and who we are. It's the same thing, for we are love incarnate. 'There ain't no more.' You cannot turn away from love, for it is woven into the very fabric of your being. Love is yours, you need only claim it. Do you deserve love? Of course you do. But it's not a question of who is deserving of love, for love comprises all things. It is love that powers the universe and all things in it.”

I asked, “Doesn't the Indian system of arranged marriages prove that love is overrated?”

“On the contrary, the Indian system proves that love is what matters. In India, couples are forced into a relationship, so they must learn to cooperate

and build a strong love. That love is nurtured through hard work, determination and a strong commitment to each other. People are also led to believe in a personal relationship with God and a strong sense of family obligations. In the United States, where romantic love is touted, people are led to believe in unrealistic expectations. They view their partners through the eyes of romance, which has more to do with hormones and sexual attraction than actual love. They are selfish, which impedes love. Some believe they can make a marriage work by sacrificing themselves for the sake of their partners, which leads only to resentment."

"In India, people find themselves in each other. That is selfless love, born of caring for the other. In the United States, people lose themselves in each other. That is romance, born of selfish desire for yourself and ego gratification."

Eager to either learn or challenge its assertions, I started studying love itself. I bought and devoured several books on love and relationships by Leo Buscaglia, Richard Bach, Merle Shain, Eric Fromm, John Bradshaw and others. But that only goes so far because, unlike most other disciplines in life, all the discussions, theories and philosophy about love fall way short of the actual practice.

Since then, I've had many discussions and arguments with my inner voice about love. I've come to believe that love is our greatest lesson in life. Or as Eden Ahbez said in the song Nature Boy, "The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return."

Let's Play!
Love Meditation
Ask yourself what love means to you. How important is love in your life? Do you want to be more or less loving? The joy in love is in giving, and it's through giving love that we are loved.

Psychic Sensitivity Exercise #2

Love in All Directions

This exercise is the same as the "sensitivity expanding" exercise except for one thing. Instead of expanding a bubble of awareness in all directions, visualize a white light that fills the bubble. Try to feel love for everyone inside the bubble of awareness.

When the bubble is at its smallest, just surrounding your body, feel love for yourself. As you expand it outward to encompass your whole house, try to feel love for everyone in your house or apartment.

As you expand it, try to feel a loving glow toward the neighbors in the nearby houses or apartments, then the whole neighborhood, and then the whole city.

Eventually, push the bubble of awareness to circle the entire world, and try to feel love for everyone on the planet. This love should be absolutely unconditional and include everyone on the planet, including people you may think are evil.

Chapter 9

“The answers are so simple,

And we all know where to look

But it's easier just to avoid the question”

--Kansas, “On The Other Side”

Spirits and Symbol Translation

As I played the game more, I was starting to get longer more detailed bursts of information from my inner voice, but it still seemed like I was mostly just making up answers to my own contrived questions, but the fact that “answers” started popping into my mind without asking any questions bothered me: I started to worry about being influenced by spirits.

Most ordinary people wouldn't give spirits a second thought, but I had encountered spirits in my OBEs, so I knew they were real. Plus, while learning to induce OBEs, I learned how to approach the edge of sleep gradually, with more awareness, so I had witnessed a phenomenon known as hypnagogic imagery. In this pre-sleep state, you vividly hallucinate images and hear voices, and who knows: maybe they were spirit voices. Hearing voices during hypnagogic imagery is all perfectly normal and natural for everyone (although most people aren't conscious to experience it), but if I could hear spirits then, I worried about bleed-through: maybe I was starting to hear them in my normal waking state.

I decided to do the only thing I could to put my mind at ease: carefully examine how I played the game and analyze what was happening. I had used a similar approach regarding my OBEs and it had worked well.

So one day between classes, I sat in a comfortable chair in the Coffman Union building. As usual, I started with my protocol question, but this time I analyzed the entire process in detail. “What is love?” The entire communication took about ten seconds to arrive. The answer was: “Love is the life force that comes from God to animate all things.”

Instead of asking another question, I went into computer analyst mode and analyzed what had just happened: the process of how that answer came to me. I hadn’t heard any voices at all. The sentence came to me in a long series of images that flashed very quickly in my imagination. It was also extremely subtle; if I hadn’t been paying attention and looking inside for the answers, the images would have been quickly discarded as mental noise.

First, I had gotten an image of an enormous cloud-like ball of energy that dwarfed a huge field of galaxies. I interpreted that as the word “God.” Next, I got an image of rays of light extending from “God,” traveling through space, and I followed them down to a galaxy, then to a solar system, and finally to a single blue and white planet, Earth.

Next, I followed the God-rays to the Earth's surface where I saw a deer standing in the middle of a forest. When the ray of light touched it, the deer looked up, took a deep breath, and the light filled the deer's lungs. The deer smiled, with an expression that told me it was filled with love.

Then the scene switched to a mouse, eating grain spilled by a railroad tracks. It also inhaled a ray. Next, I saw a man standing in a crowded city, and he too inhaled a ray of God's love. All the images flashed quickly in my mind.

Then I saw another image of the Earth covered with billions of dots that all became brighter, signifying that all the creatures of the Earth inhaled God's love.

What was really going on was this: I received mental symbols and images and translated them into words. I had translated the images I got into the words: "God," "rays of light," "extend," "Earth," "inhaled" and "all living creatures." But that was only half the process. The next step was to form the words into a sentence and silently recite it back to myself.

The sentence underwent several revisions, in just seconds. My "first-draft sentence" was something like: "Love is God's rays of light that extend to the Earth and are inhaled by all living creatures." The sentence was too cumbersome, but that was the literal English translation.

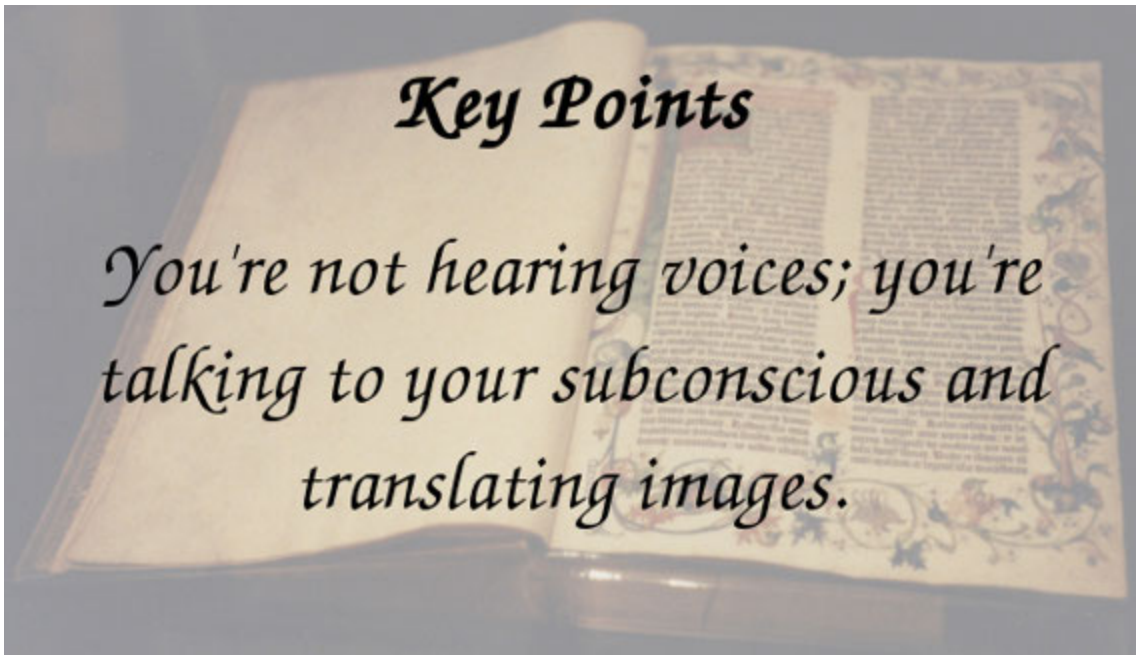
The phrase, "are inhaled by," was cumbersome so I pondered alternatives. It was like asking for a clarification; immediately, I received one. I saw a barrier blocking the rays, then the Earth, covered with dots that went black. When the barrier disappeared the lights appeared again. The meaning was clear: without God's love, everything would cease to exist. Since the "answer" was regarding the sentence's verb, I knew I had to switch from "inhales" to something more like "animates" and from "rays of light" to "life-force."

Next, I got another clarification. I saw a big rock that disappeared and reappeared again. Again, the meaning was clear: “all living creatures” wasn’t quite right. If God’s love was absent, the rocks would disappear too. I switched it to “all things.”

The final step was to reorganize the sentence structure and repeat it to myself. As with foreign language translation, I had to switch the order of the sentence’s constituent parts. Rearranged, my final translated sentence became, “Love is the life force that comes from God and animates all things.” I repeated it silently to myself.

This may seem tedious, but remember that the entire process only took seconds from start to finish. As time went on, I got faster at the translation process: today the same process only takes one or two seconds to receive and translate.

By closely analyzing the translation process, I finally understood what was going on. I was just talking to my own subconscious, which “spoke to me” in images and symbols, then I translated them into English words. I then reformulated the words into sentences, clarified the meaning with more images, then repeated it to myself.

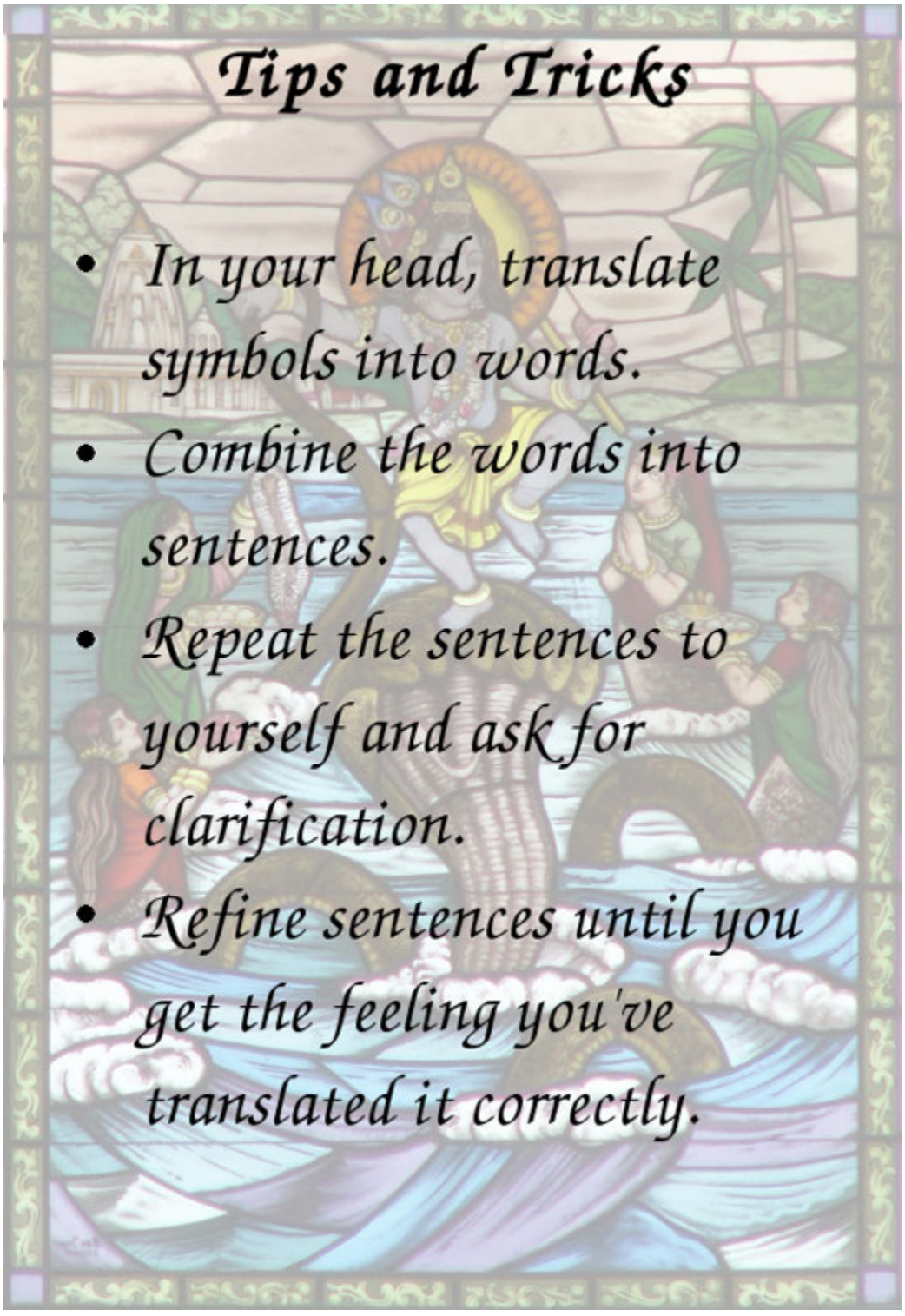


Eventually I started getting multiple images at the same time. For example, I'd ask, “What is love?” and my inner wisdom would begin answering “Love is the...” as I'd simultaneously get the words “fountain” and “infinity.” Sometimes it was hard to tell whether my inner voice gave me two answers (“Love is the fountain” and “Love is infinity”) or whether it was trying to convey one combined answer (“Love is the fountain of infinity”).

It was only after years of playing the game that my inner voice was able to send words directly to me rather than just images and symbols.

I was relieved: there was no deep dark mystery, no hocus-pocus, no spooky spirits. I wasn't hearing voices or going crazy after all. My subconscious was getting information —wisdom— from somewhere and sending it to me in its own language. Did it really matter where the information was coming from?

Eleven months after I started playing the Wisdom Game, I had an OBE and wrote about it in my journal. As long as I was writing I decided to write about my inner voice for the first time. I simply noted, “Also, all I have to do is wonder about something and the answer will come to me.” In retrospect, it was a pretty lame description of what was happening to me.


Tips and Tricks
• In your head, translate symbols into words.
• Combine the words into sentences.
• Repeat the sentences to yourself and ask for clarification.
• Refine sentences until you get the feeling you've translated it correctly.

The second time I actually wrote about my inner voice was nearly a year later, almost two years after I started playing the game. By then I had

started thinking about it as my “inner voice.” And it was equally nondescript.

Let's Play!
Study Subconscious Symbols
Learn what symbols your subconscious uses to communicate.
Verify them by asking for clarification.

Chapter 10

"You're fighting the weight of the world

And no one can save you this time

Close your eyes

You can find all you need in your mind"

--Dream Theater, "Take the Time"

The Psychic Connection

I worked very hard the summer of 1980 to earn enough money to pay for my next two quarters of school. I lived in Minneapolis, worked in St. Paul, and went to the University, half way between them, so I had long bus rides or bike rides from place to place. It was before I owned my first motorcycle, so busing and biking were my only choices. Both gave me lots of time for introspection and chats with my inner voice.

Summer eventually turned to autumn and classes began again. I had a lot going on: classes at the University, homework, my job, my computer hobby, my out-of-body experiences, and reading lots of books. No, not the class books I should have been reading, but books on spirituality. Despite being so busy, I continued playing the wisdom game at every opportunity.

As part of my Computer Science degree, I had to take a number of elective classes. I chose philosophy classes. As the professors explained and demonstrated the beliefs and arguments of famous philosophers like Saint Augustine, Immanuel Kant, and David Hume, I'd be curious. “I wonder what my inner voice would say about this?” Pretty soon I was asking my inner voice for opinions on the topics during class, which it seemed more than happy to give.

If I was bored in class, I'd ask my inner voice for comments constantly, for almost everything the professor said.

Then one day, when I was really bored,I made another breakthrough. I learned how to leave the communications channel open and let it comment as it saw fit. It felt kind of like having a “running question mark” in my mind, as I learned to maintain that inner sense of quiet contemplation.

This was similar to the “lesson touchstone” I wrote about in chapter 6, but instead of periodically asking, “What do you think?” I would say inwardly, “Chime in if you have any comments.” Then I'd try to pay more attention to stray thoughts arriving in the background of my mind as the professor spoke.

This process of leaving the communication channel open is very much like watching a noisy sports game while you're expecting a call on your cell phone: you pay attention to the task at hand, but you keep a hint of awareness in the background, listening for that ring tone.

Of course, writing class papers was easy: transcribing my inner voice was almost like taking dictation.

As I played the wisdom game more and more, I noticed that the answers were unlike anything I would say in day-to-day life. I was scientific, analytical and materialistic; in other words, very surface-oriented. My inner voice was just the opposite: flowery, philosophical, thought-provoking and definitely very “deep.”

One day I asked it, “What's today's lesson?”

It said, “Today, pretend that this is your last day on earth. Make every moment count. Death teaches us to cherish life, just as starvation teaches us to cherish food. This is the yin and yang of life.”

Already recognizing its precognitive ability without fully realizing it, I started to worry. “Am I going to die?”

Tips and Tricks
• Ask your inner voice to comment on philosophy.
• Try to keep a running question mark in your mind, a space for your inner voice to comment.

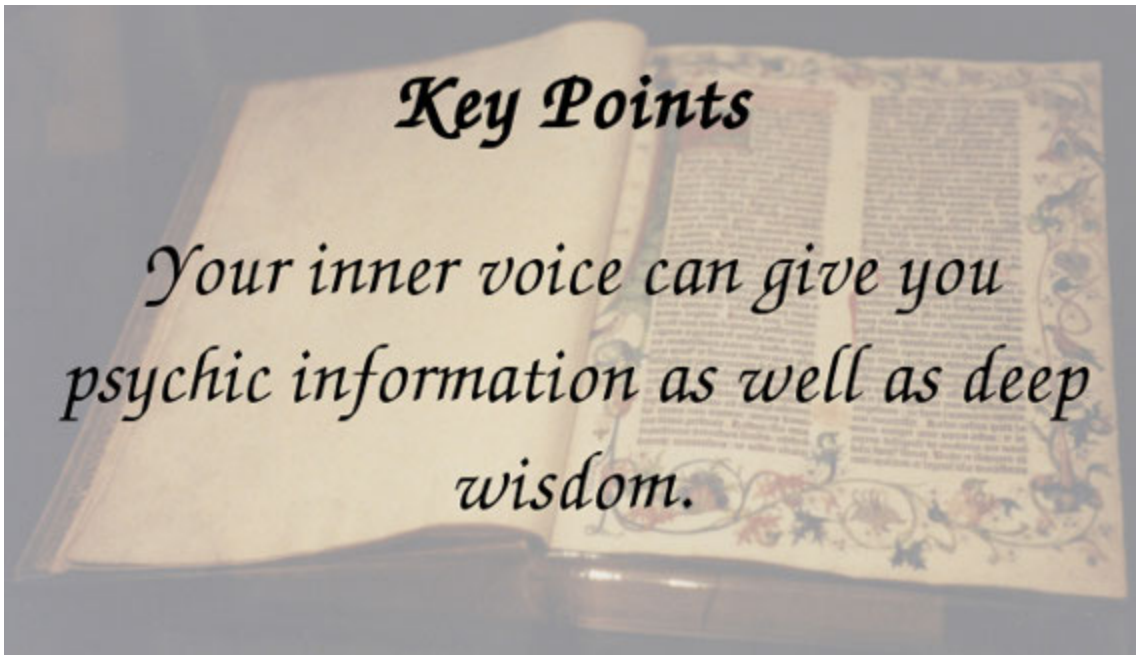
“Yes, most definitely!” There was a pause and a slight hint of mischief. “But not today. No one gets out of here alive. That's why we need to take advantage of every minute of life.”

Eventually I started expanding my questions from deep philosophical and religious questions to more mundane questions, to which I received equally mundane answers.

At the same time, I started to keep the communication channel open (hold my “running question mark”) longer. Not just in class, but throughout the entire day. Every few hours, I'd ask my protocol question again to strengthen the communication channel. As a result, information started to come more and more without initiating the protocol; they were just answers without questions. I felt like I was playing a metaphysical game of Jeopardy!

Sometimes I would get a song stuck in my head that seemed to come from that same place of inner quietness. Trying to get it out of my mind, I'd turn on the radio, only to discover that song playing on the radio. Then I'd second-guess myself and wonder if I had heard a radio playing in the distance and the song had been registered only by my subconscious. I did my best to rationalize those incidents and deny anything "supernatural" was going on. But such events started getting more complex and difficult to rationalize.

One day I was leaving the house when I got the image of a bottle of aspirin from my inner voice. I went back inside and got some aspirin and took it with me. Later that day, a friend complained about a headache, at which point I produced the bottle. It reminded me of the scene from the Marx Brothers movie "Horse Feathers" where a beggar, looking for a handout, asks Harpo, "Say, buddy, could you help me out? I'd like to get a cup of coffee," and Harpo pulls a steaming-hot cup of coffee out of his pocket and hands it to him.



Another day I went into a single-stall bathroom and noticed the toilet seat was wet. I was annoyed that someone would pee on the toilet seat and not clean it up. But my inner voice flashed an image to me; I saw the toilet flushing so forcefully that water splashed up from inside the bowl. Translation: “It's only water on the seat.” After I wiped it down and did my business, I watched as I flushed the toilet. Sure enough, water splashed from the bowl up onto the seat again. Another great mystery solved. I wiped it dry for the next person.

As I walked out, I noticed a woman acting strangely, pretending to be busy. I wondered what she was doing. I immediately got an image of her walking into the same bathroom. Again, the message was clear: “She's waiting to use the bathroom you were occupying.” And she was. I watched as she went into the bathroom I had just left.

As time went on, the unsolicited answers started getting longer and more complex. At the same time, I learned how to extend the quietness of my mind for longer messages to come through.

One day I was sitting in one of the computer labs and noticed that my heart skipped a beat. It wasn't unusual, but it had happened several times that week. I wondered, “Why is my heart skipping beats more often?”

Tips and Tricks
Be receptive to messages even when you're not playing the game.
Pause your mind periodically in case there's a message.
When it's safe, unfocus your eyes. Less focus on your outer senses leads to more focus on your inner senses.

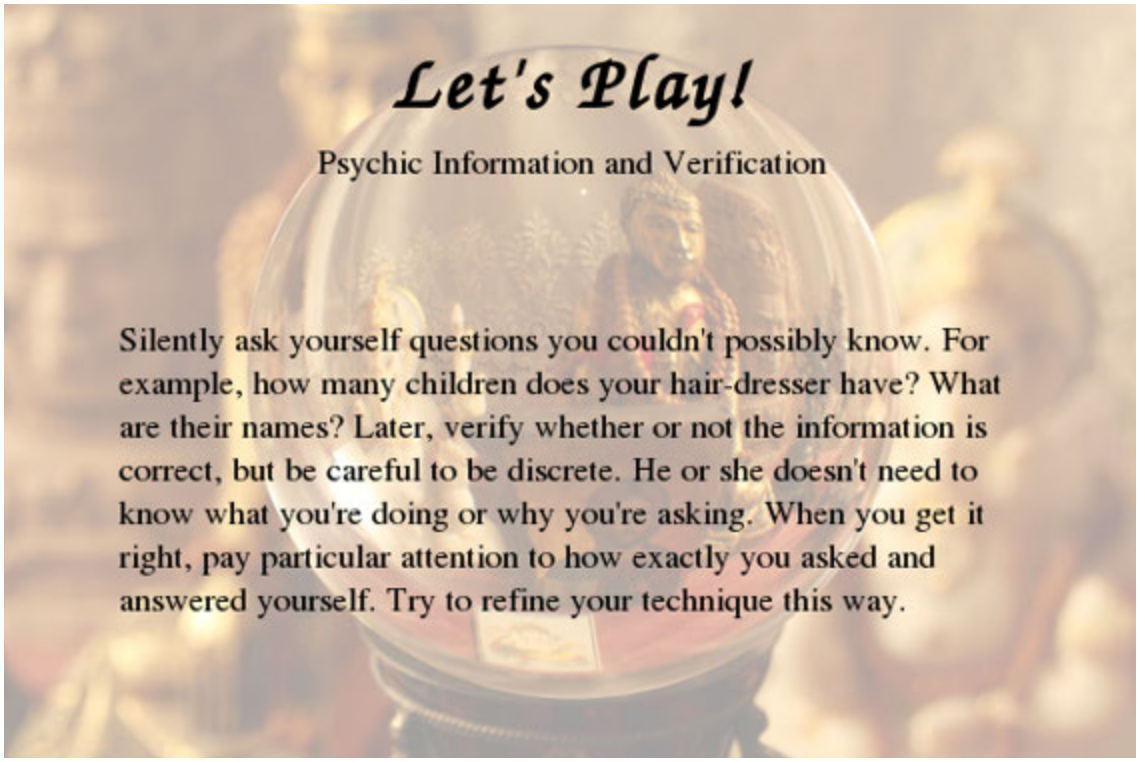
Without really initiating the protocol, my inner voice said, “Caffeine,” with some stray images that I immediately translated to “Because you've been drinking too much caffeine lately.” I countered, thinking to myself, “Yes, but that's because I've been tired lately.” My inner voice countered back with an image of me sleeping in my bed, but the width of the image was getting more and more narrow, which I translated as “Because you haven't been getting enough sleep lately.” I was arguing with my inner voice!

One day I was sitting in one of my classes, taking a test, squirming uncomfortably in my seat. It was nearing the end of the hour and I was sweating bullets, staring at the last test question, trying to remember an important formula.

My mind was hopelessly blank. Almost like the times I paused it for the wisdom game.

Suddenly, in my mind's eye, I saw an image of the Greek letter Phi, then an image of an equal sign, then a pause. Translation: “phi equals?” That jogged my memory and I remembered the formula just in time to complete the last question. Wiping the sweat from my brow, I handed in my test booklet and headed for the door. I hadn't been given the answer to the test question, but I had been given exactly what I needed: a clue to help me remember.

It struck me that my inner voice had stopped being a game. And it didn't necessarily involve wisdom. It was a tool I could use, and it was giving me psychic information. So I looked for ways to strengthen the connection.


Let's Play!
Psychic Information and Verification
Silently ask yourself questions you couldn't possibly know. For example, how many children does your hair-dresser have? What are their names? Later, verify whether or not the information is correct, but be careful to be discrete. He or she doesn't need to know what you're doing or why you're asking. When you get it right, pay particular attention to how exactly you asked and answered yourself. Try to refine your technique this way.

Musical Interlude #3

“Awaken” by Yes

In this exercise, the object is to listen to music and visualize the sounds. I have done this countless times and it always increases my psychic awareness. I don't know why, but it does.

Many people who are into this prefer to use soft meditation music like Steven Halpern. Not me. I prefer complex and often fast music, also called “progressive rock”. I like a good crescendo, where a piece of music gradually gets louder and more intense. For this exercise, I prefer music that gets not only louder and more intense, but also higher in pitch. I imagine that the pitch is directly related to the vibrational level of my soul, so as the pitch goes up, the vibrations of my soul get higher and higher. I also like to use very long songs.

My favorite song for this exercise is a fifteen-minute track called “Awaken” by the band Yes.

Obviously, different people like different music, and in doing this with groups, I've discovered that my music simply doesn't work for other people. I once led a group meditation using “Awaken” and after the meditation they all looked at me confused. This was clearly not meditation music! The song alternates between fast and complex and slow and melodic. Nonetheless, “Awaken” increases my psychic awareness, so I still recommend it.

The song starts out with a quick chaotic piano solo that slowly becomes organized. Next, the lone voice of Jon Anderson evokes images of being alone in meditation or maybe sitting in outer space. Throughout the song, Anderson recites classic Yes-style poetry that evokes religious and spiritual images. It's easy to imagine being suspended in space, meditating to the poetry: “High vibration go on, to the sun, oh let my heart dreaming...”

At two minutes in, bass and electric guitars join in and move up and down like waves. At three minutes in, there are drums, and the electric guitar gets faster and higher in pitch. In my mind, I follow every little note of the electric guitar. As each note plays, I imagine a graph in front of me and as the pitch goes up, the graph spikes up. The graph has several lines, one for each of the musical instruments playing in the song; as the pitch goes up and down, my imaginary graph follows it.

My conscious awareness is too busy following all the little notes up and down to think about anything else. At five minutes in, the music is joined by the sound of a pipe organ that adds religious feelings and context to the song.

At about six minutes in, the music stops altogether and you're left in the quietness with a tiny tinkling bell and a synthesizer that eventually is joined by a pipe organ. My mind enters an extremely deep meditative trance, but I'm still mentally graphing the music with lines that represent each instrument.

About ten minutes in, the song repeats a pattern that gradually increases in pitch and intensity. I imagine the vibrations of my soul are soaring higher and higher as the music gets higher and higher.

At twelve minutes in, all that’s left is the pipe organ, which means my imaginary graph is down to a single instrument. The organ dances up and down, but mostly up. As the organ reaches up higher and higher, so does my consciousness. The music keeps getting more and more intense until the final few minutes.

At thirteen minutes and thirteen seconds into the song, the synthesizer zaps several high-pitched notes that evoke an image of sparks of electricity shooting out of my head. Then the song gets calm again and finishes as it started.

The key is for you to follow the music with your mind. Visualize its peaks and valleys. Direct your mind in circles if that's what the music does.

I don't know how it works, but it makes me more psychic. Perhaps it will make you more psychic too.

Chapter 11

“Just reach for the sky,

There's nothing that you can't do,

Just open your eyes,

Oooh, the light will shine on you.”

--Slaughter, “Reach for the Sky”

Be Nonjudgmental

“What's today's lesson?” I asked.

“Today, look deep into people's eyes, but look at them without judgment. Try not to categorize them or place a value on them. Look at them with complete love and acceptance. Don't assume them to be smart or stupid because of their appearance. Try to see that they are souls, just like you, learning lessons and doing the best they can. Pretend they're your brother or sister and say to yourself, I accept you and love you just as you are.”

I had my doubts but my inner voice stepped in to quash them. “Try to put yourself in their shoes. See their side of things. The more you put yourself in their place, the more you take yourself out of your ego, and the closer you are to God.”

Later, at the University, I left a building and headed toward my next class. My route took me through the Architecture building, which had a corridor that joined that building to another. As I walked, I noticed a young woman walking about fifty feet ahead. Unsolicited, my inner voice sent me the word “Pregnant.” Whoa, I thought, this is weird. A minute later, she turned, which gave me a view of her profile: I saw that she had a bit more lower belly than normal. I was stunned. Maybe her gait was just odd and my subconscious had picked up on it. Wherever that had come from, it had obviously been right.

Tips and Tricks
You'll learn more about someone if you remain completely non-judgmental, with unconditional acceptance and love.

I thought to myself how her life was probably ruined. The baby would interrupt her education and with a baby to care for and no college degree, she'd probably never go back to school. Her life would basically be over. She had ruined her life by making poor choices.

My inner voice scolded me for being judgmental. “You should not judge her. Her pregnancy was part of her life-lesson and it will be the best thing for her spiritual growth.”

As I walked, I reflected on how something could seem “bad” to me and yet be “good” to someone else. My inner voice said, “To the mouse, the cat's pounce is evil: death. To the cat, the same pounce is good: dinner. In God's eyes all things are relative to perspective and all is meant to be.”

I entered the next building and turned toward my classroom. In front of me walked a man who limped. My idle mind was curious: what was his story and why was he limping? I wasn't being judgmental this time, I was just curious.

Even though I hadn’t “officially” asked the question, my inner voice responded, “He's limping because in his senior year of high-school, he had an accident during a track and field event that required surgery. He was rushed to Hennepin County Medical Center where they saved the leg, but he will walk with a limp for the rest of his life.”

Whoa, whoa, whoa, TMI! Too much information! It seemed as if my attitude of non-judgment brought me more information than before.

For a second I thought about asking the man if any of it was true, but then I realized how crazy that would sound. Excuse me sir, but the voice inside my head told me this story...I know how I'd react in his shoes. That was crazy-talk! Then I remembered a song I'd heard on Doctor Demento called

“They're Coming to Take Me Away” and wisely decided not to pursue the matter.

Then I thought, “If it's true, how awful. What a shame.”

My inner voice replied, “There is no shame. All is meant to be. He chose the direction of his life, and it was all part of his life-plan.”

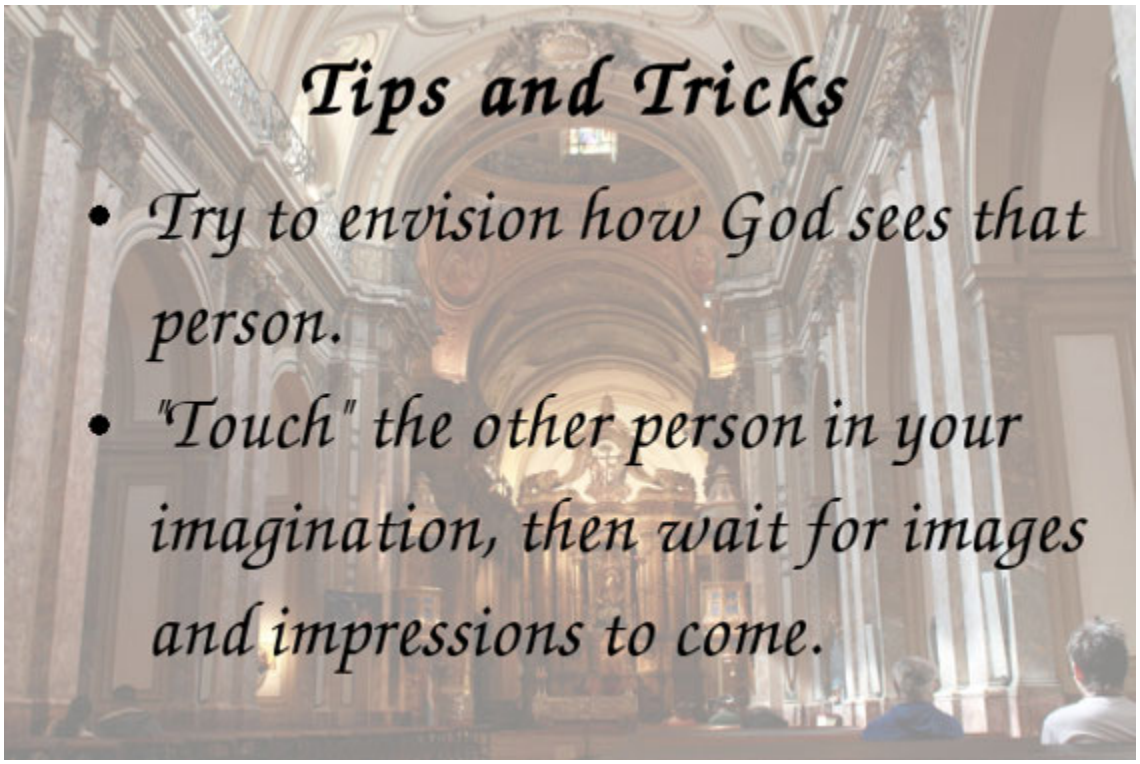
It wasn't quite wisdom and it wasn't quite spiritual, but it was wise nonetheless.

The wisdom game had taken another turn. In playing the game, I had formed the habit of pausing my thoughts quite often, and that had carried over to when I was not playing the game. And that had a positive benefit: “answers” from my inner voice started coming more often without my asking any question and without initiating the protocol.

Tips and Tricks
Temporarily set yourself, your needs and your ego aside. You'll learn more about others if you have less "you" in the picture.

I continued walking but now, remembering this morning's lesson, I looked deeply into people's eyes, left my mind completely blank and nonjudgmental. I discovered that my own ego had been acting as a barrier to receiving psychic impressions. The more I took “me” out of the equation, the more I could see of the other person.

Also, it seemed like the more nonjudgmental I was, the more psychic impressions came to me. If I mentally broadcast the thought “I accept you as you are without judgment,” I could see deeply into people. In fact, it seemed like I could see their deepest, darkest secrets. The moment I attached a judgment, the impressions stopped flowing.


Tips and Tricks
• Try to envision how God sees that person.
• "Touch" the other person in your imagination, then wait for images and impressions to come.

The realization that it was more than a game led to a whole barrage of uncomfortable questions. What would people say if they knew I was talking to myself? Is this like hearing voices? Hearing voices sounds a lot worse than talking to yourself. What if my OBEs and the wisdom game were unlocking some kind of door that should remain shut? What if I was really just dabbling with spirits? Is this how people go insane? Is this really Satan whispering quietly in my ear? Can playing devil's advocate engage the Devil himself?

Then it occurred to me: if I had all these uncomfortable questions, so could anyone else, if they knew what I was doing.

One thing was for sure: I needed to keep my mouth shut and keep my experiences to myself. It's one thing to talk about out-of-body experiences: they've been documented for thousands of years. It's another thing altogether to talk about inner voices. I vowed not to tell anyone about the

wisdom game, not even my own family or my closest friends. The last thing I needed was to be looking over my shoulder for the men in the white coats.

Let's Play!
Non-Judgment
Look people in the eye, keep your mind blank and hold a firm resolve of non-judgment. Then let the psychic impressions flow.

Chapter 12

“Cast off your garments of fear,

Replace them with love,

Most of all play with the game of the age”

--Yes, “Madrigal”

Other People's Lessons

I started thinking about the incidents with the pregnant woman and limping man and had another idea: I wasn't limited to my own lessons; I could ask my inner voice about other people's lessons too.

The next time I went to the University I did an experiment: I used my protocol question to initiate contact as I walked into Lind Hall. As I walked toward my class, I scanned the hallway for random students. I saw a woman walking the same direction, with her back toward me. I asked, “What's her life-lesson?” It said, “She's working on self-worth. She hates her body and thinks she's ugly, unlovable. She chose that body before she was born to force herself through this lesson. We are all worthy of love and we are all lovable.”

I picked out another man going about his business. “What's his life-lesson?” “He's learning to value people more than things. He's learning about the

trap of materialism. He will be successful and buy lots of things but there will always be a hole in his life until he sacrifices those things and embraces the people in his life."

I quickly chose another. "What about him?" "Forgiveness; he will be betrayed soon."

I paused and watched people walk by. I spotted a woman and asked, "And her?" "She's learning grace and to let people help her. She will succumb to a disease that will render her body helpless. She needs to learn to accept help with gratitude and accept her condition with grace. She needs to see herself as more than her physical body."

She looked healthy enough to me. "Will the disease kill her?" "That is her choice. Whether she lives or dies is important to the body but unimportant to the soul. If she learns her life-lesson, she will have accomplished her mission. She can also choose to start a new life-lesson."

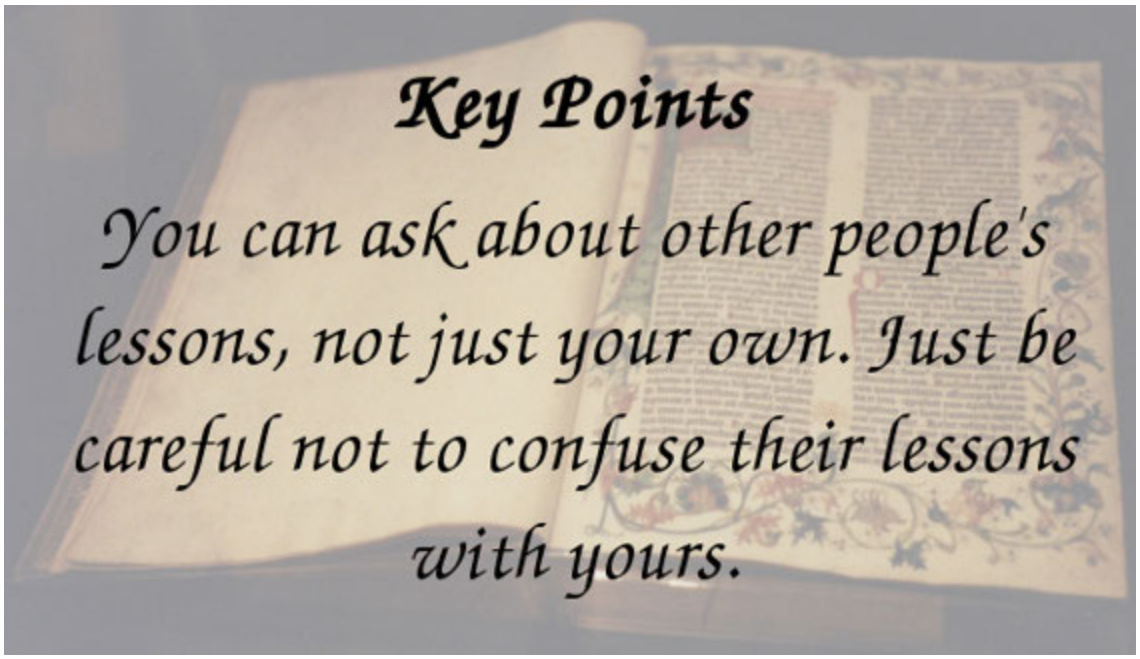
I was sad. "What if she doesn't learn?" "She will. It's just a matter of how much pain and suffering she endures before it sinks in. And when her life is over, she will experience the great joy of release."

I didn't know whether any of these things were true. I wondered if they were, or if those lessons were really meant for me. I only knew that the thought of her suffering bothered me. My inner voice scolded me, "Do not confuse her lessons with your own. It's okay to learn from someone else's experience but it's not okay to let them distract you from your own. And it's not okay to use your knowledge to interfere with their lessons."

“If they're not my lessons and I can't interfere, then what's the point?” I countered. “The point is: everyone is your teacher. They may not be your life-lessons but you can still learn from them.”

I felt like I could ask questions all day, and my inner voice would never run out of things to say.

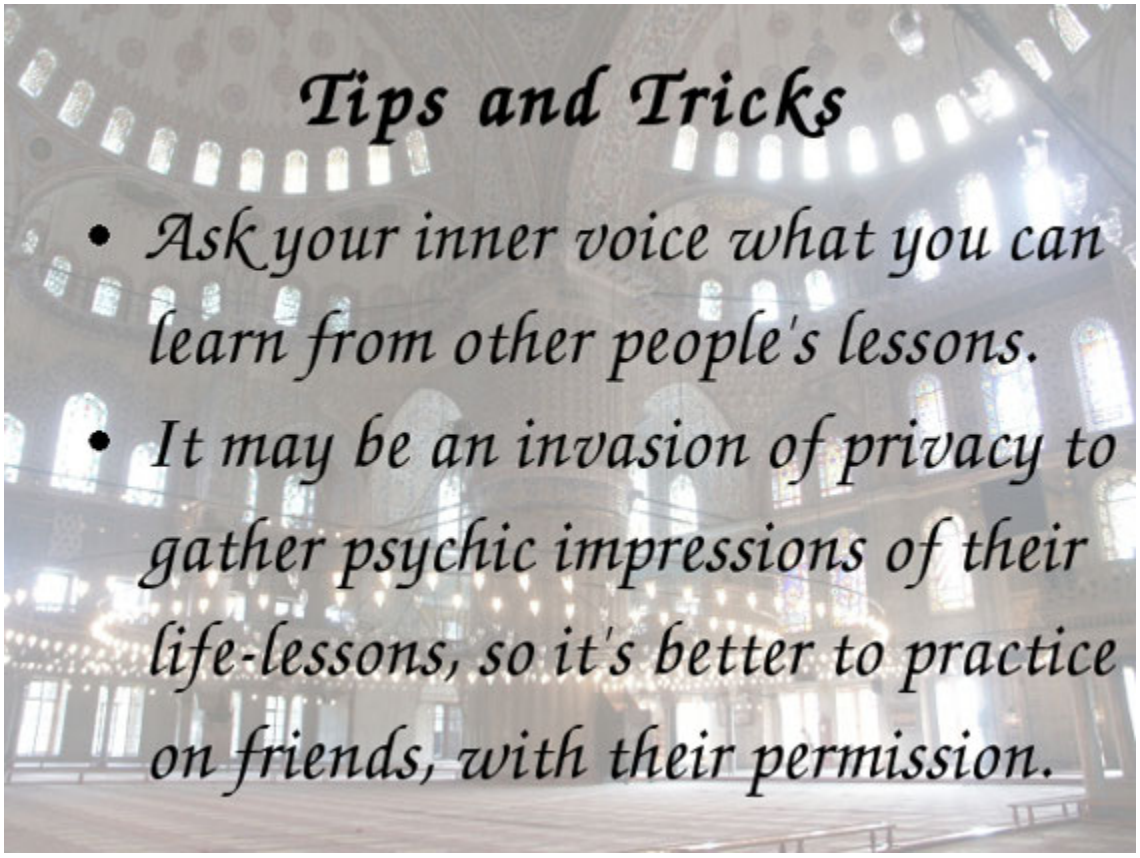
From that point on, I expanded the wisdom game to include other people and their life-lessons. What I discovered was astounding: my inner voice was more than happy to reveal people's deepest darkest secrets if I asked. And it made me wonder: Is this what “being psychic” is all about?


Key Points
You can ask about other people's lessons, not just your own. Just be careful not to confuse their lessons with yours.

I knew for sure I couldn't tell these strangers what my inner voice said. It just sounded too crazy. I couldn't tell anyone any of it. I was alone. At least with my OBEs other people had written books I could reference. With my

inner voice, there was no guidance at all. At that point, I was completely unaware of any books on the subject. I didn't even know where to look in the library's card catalog (this was long before the Internet existed).

It also gave me a new perspective: that everyone we meet is our teacher, to be treated with love and respect.


Tips and Tricks
• Ask your inner voice what you can learn from other people's lessons.
• It may be an invasion of privacy to gather psychic impressions of their life-lessons, so it's better to practice on friends, with their permission.

Since the Internet didn't exist, I looked for information in books. One day I was in downtown Minneapolis shopping at a bookstore on the Nicollet Mall. I was in the “New Age” (metaphysical) section looking for more OBE books. I also searched the shelves for books that might tell me the source of my inner voice and found nothing.

A strange purple-covered paperback caught my eye. It was Seth Speaks by Jane Roberts. It claimed to be “channeled” by a non-physical entity named Seth. To me it sounded like trance mediumship of the early 1900s: It was “spooky” stuff, not anything like my inner voice. Or was it? I was still very Catholic and remembered stern warnings in the Bible to not consult with spirits. The book of Leviticus said “Any man or woman among you who calls up ghosts or spirits shall be put to death” (see Leviticus 19:31, 20:6, and 20:27). And yet, Jesus himself consulted with the spirits of dead prophets.

The book awakened my curiosity. And my fears. I needed to know if channeling could be related to my inner voice. So I bought the book and started reading.

Jane Roberts learned to channel Seth by experimenting with a Ouija board. Through trial and error she learned to anticipate the board's answers before they came, and that seemed similar to what I was doing with the wisdom game. In fact, among the ideas and images I received, I was now often getting (not hearing) complete words that didn't need translating.

As the weeks went by, I read several books on channeling and mediumship. I stubbornly refused to believe they were related to my inner voice, but deep down I was afraid they were.

Many years later, a few inner-voice books appeared in book stores. Three I can recommend are The Intuitive Advantage by Kathryn Harwig, A Still, Small Voice: A Psychic's Guide to Awakening Intuitionby Echo Bodine, and The Daemon: A Guide to Your Extraordinary Secret Selfby Anthony Peake. But back then I was on my own.

Let's Play!
Other People's Lessons
Pick out some people at random and ask your inner voice, "What is their life-lesson?"

Psychic Sensitivity Exercise #3

Vibration Increase

Here is another exercise to increase your psychic sensitivity. It can be done anywhere you can sit down or lie down comfortably and safely close your eyes: I recommend a couch, a comfortable chair or even your bed.

Get comfortable, close your eyes and meditate. Pretend your body is vibrating, especially inside your head. Next, visualize a white light parked above your head. The light is bright enough to make it look like you have a halo.

Next, imagine that your vibrations get higher in pitch, as if you were turning a control knob that makes them go higher and higher. As the pitch increases, the light above your head gets brighter.

Pretend that the vibrations get so fast that you can no longer feel them. Instead, you can hear with your imaginary ears as a high-pitched whine inside your head.

Eventually the vibrations get too high to hear with your imaginary ears, but imagine they are getting faster and faster. Keep turning up the pitch until you can no longer “hear” the vibrations in your imagination.

Chapter 13

“So no one knew, not even him,

The problems he would find,

On the day he journeyed deep into his mind”

--Kansas, “Closet Chronicles”

Self-Doubt

I was still Catholic, and part of that label included a “not worthy” clause. So I had a really hard time accepting that something unusual—and psychic—was happening to me. I was filled with self-doubt.

What I needed most was validation, and that's exactly what I got.

“What's today's lesson?” I asked one day.

“Today's lesson is openness. Try to remain open to new possibilities, ideas and avenues. Remain open and receptive to messages from within.”

“Oh, come on,” I told myself, “This is all crap. It's just a stupid game. I'm making it all up. I'm just picking words out of thin air and pretending I'm wise. There's nothing supernatural about the Wisdom Game; I'm just fooling myself.”

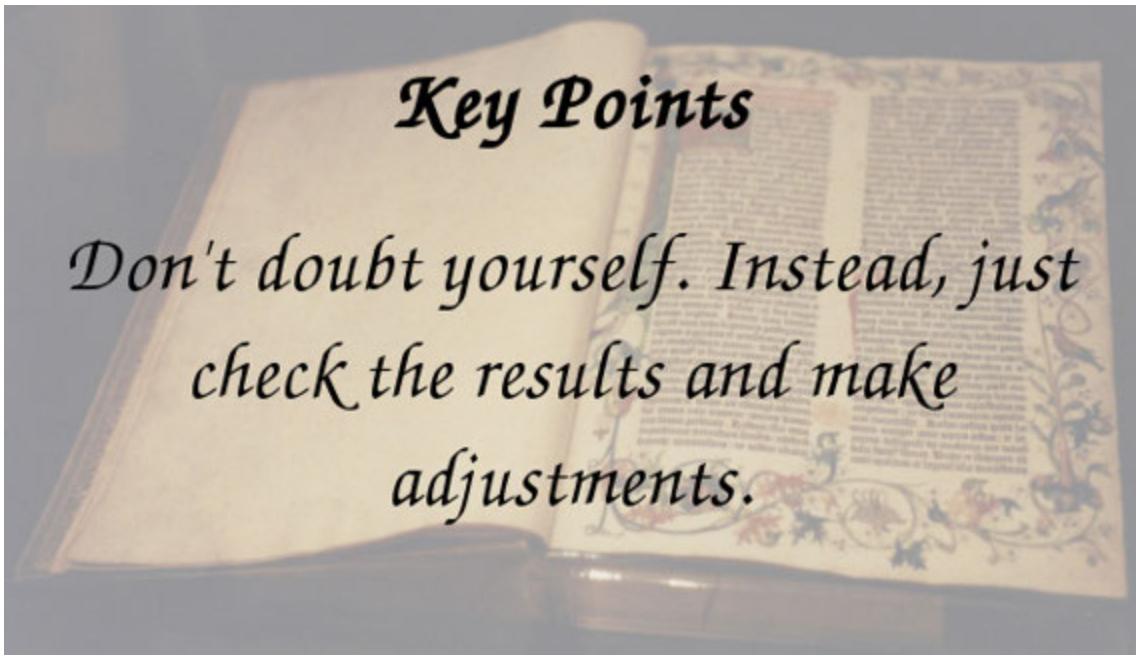
I remembered one of my favorite songs by Styx called “Fooling Yourself”. The refrain went something like, “You're fooling yourself if you don't believe it.” Hmm, was that really a memory? Or was it a message from my inner voice too? Bah!

My scientific nature led me to deny that anything supernatural was going on. In fact, the whole idea of channeling and psychics and all that new-age nonsense was completely ridiculous. Well...except for one small problem: my out-of-body experiences. My OBEs were piling up quickly and they were so in-your-face, so concrete, that I could not deny they were real. If someone else had had my experiences and described them to me, I could blow it off and tell them they were the product of an over-active imagination. I'd tell them They're just really vivid dreams, you idiot. The trouble was, they were happening to me. On a weekly basis.

Still, it was one thing to be forced to admit OBEs were real; seeing is believing. It's another thing entirely to talk about images and ideas I formulated in my own mind and somehow grant them magical powers. I'm just like everyone else, so suddenly it seemed ridiculous to believe I had any psychic powers. It was nonsense. It was only a game I used to kill time, nothing more. Still, it had become a part of my daily life and I didn't want to give it up. It was so much fun that I kept on playing.

Hungry for validation, I started using the game for more mundane things. I asked it about everything. One day I was running toward my bus stop, late,

backpack full of books bouncing off my back. As I ran I asked, “Will I make it in time?” It said “Yes,” and it was right.



At some point, I became so proficient that I could safely talk to my inner voice while driving. I no longer had to pause for reflection because my “running question mark” kept the communication channel open.

One day I was riding my motorcycle to work, and after choosing a route, I visualized both roads I could take. I got a feeling from my inner voice that I should forgo the chosen route and take the other. Later, when I got to point where the two routes rejoined, I found the route I had planned to take was torn up for repairs. It would have been a harrowing ride through the dirt for my motorcycle and I thanked my inner voice for guiding me away from the road construction.

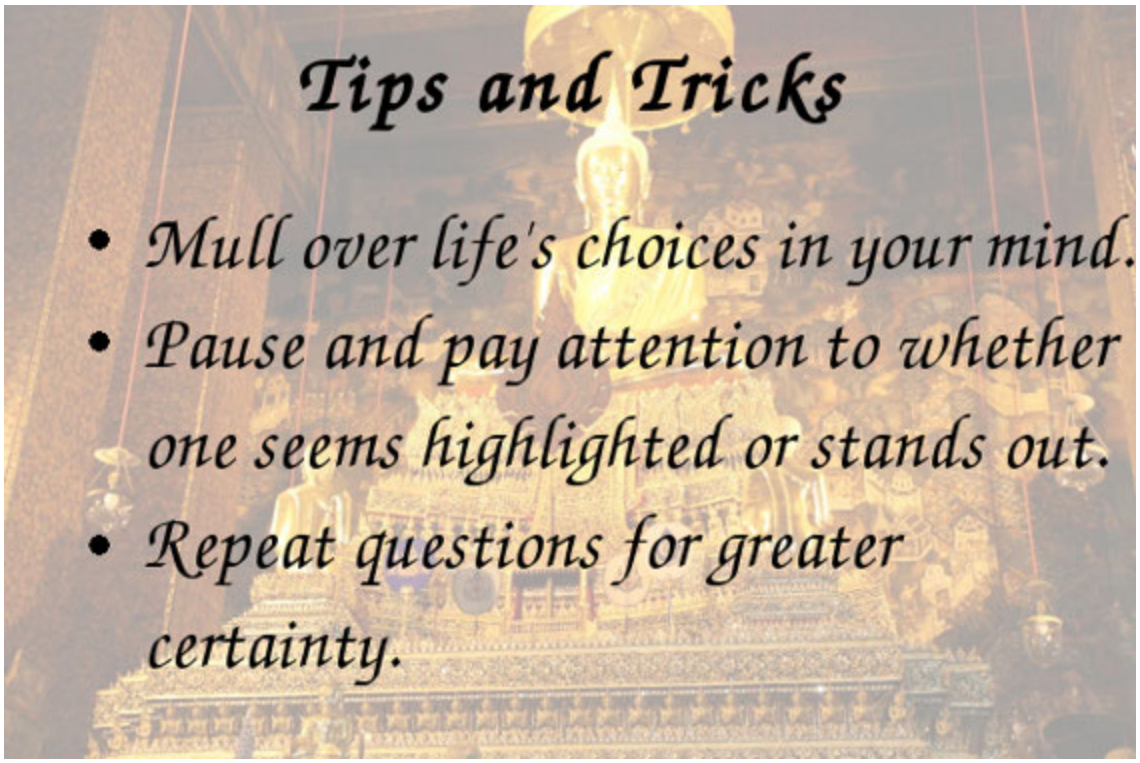
Another time I was playing the card game 500 with my family and I wondered which card to play: The king of one suit or the ten of another. My

inner voice said, “ten.” After I played the ten, my partner said it was the card she was waiting to see.

One day I was driving on the freeway behind a slow car, so I asked my inner voice, “Should I pass this guy?” It said, “Don't bother; he's about to take this exit ramp.” Sure enough, he did. That gave me an idea: maybe it could help me with traffic.

I started asking questions like, “I need to get to St. Paul, so will it be quicker to take I-694 to 35E or 35W to I-94?” Then I created an imaginary map of Minneapolis in my mind and repeatedly visualized the first route, then the second. As I alternated between them, I noticed that one of the routes appeared brighter in my mind, as if my inner voice had used a yellow highlighter and marked the best route.

Sometimes I'd take the highlighted route and it would be smooth sailing. Other times, for the sake of validation, I'd ignore its advice and go the other way, and it usually ended in snarled traffic. Of course, I couldn't tell what was happening on the recommended route, so I didn't know if it was right.


Tips and Tricks
• Mull over life's choices in your mind.
• Pause and pay attention to whether one seems highlighted or stands out.
• Repeat questions for greater certainty.

One day as I was returning home, my inner voice said, “Look at the ice buildup on the roof.”

I dismissed it. “Nah,” I thought, “It's not important.” My inner voice insisted, “Look at the ice buildup on the roof.”

There was one corner of the house that always seemed to have an ice-dam in the winter. “Oh, alright,” I thought. “It won't do any harm.”

I walked back down the sidewalk. It was a two-story house, so I had to step off the shoveled path into a deep snowbank in order to see the edge of the roof. Snow fell into my boots and I knew my socks would soon be wet, as I craned my neck to see. There was only one small icicle hanging from the

corner of the house. I scolded my inner voice, “See? There's no ice dam there; this is a big waste of time.”

I went inside and my mom came into the kitchen to greet me. She told me she was worried about the ice buildup on the house and asked if I could check it for her while my jacket and boots were still on! I was dumbfounded.

When I told her I already had checked the roof, she didn't believe me. She thought I was just being lazy. You know teenagers! Meanwhile, my inner voice sent me an “inner laugh.” It said, “Wasted effort indeed!”

At first it was easy to write incidents like this off as coincidence, but as the weeks went by, the scenarios got more complex. Readers of my first book may remember this incident:

One day I decided to eat lunch in the cafeteria where I worked at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. I stood in line trying to decide what flavor of yogurt to buy. I decided to get blueberry yogurt. As I picked up a container my inner voice said, “Boysenberry.” I asked my inner voice, “Do you mean I should switch [flavors]?” It said, “That's okay. Eat what you like.” So I decided to keep my blueberry yogurt. I sat down and opened it, but much to my surprise there was boysenberry flavored yogurt inside! The carton was plainly marked “Blueberry” and the carton was deep blue, but the yogurt inside was purple boysenberry.

The evidence kept mounting. Eventually it became clear that my inner voice's advice was sound. As much as it was against my nature, after

incidents like these happened enough times, I had to finally admit that something extraordinary was going on. My inner voice was indeed a source of psychic information, regardless of where it came from.

Let's Play!
Look For Highlighted Paths
Whenever you face a simple choice in life, pose both options to your inner voice and see which stands out more in your mind. Alternate between taking the highlighted and the non-highlighted option to see how well your intuition is working.

Chapter 14

“We are afraid of all the things

that could not be—a phantom agony”

--Epica, “The Phantom Agony”

The Voice of Fear

“What's today's lesson?” I asked.

“Today, show your true colors. Oh, and by the way...We're all God-colored inside.”

I had begun to use my inner voice for many things in my daily life. The messages, as always, were a very fast set of subtle images and feelings. But I soon found out that the messages from my subconscious don't always come from a higher source. There's another source of inner messages. I call it the voice of fear.

The voice of fear manifests as all kinds of subconscious insecurities: doubt, worry, fear, pessimism. It can present itself as flashes of images, sounds, ideas and uncomfortable feelings, not unlike messages from your inner voice.

One day, I was hurrying toward my physics class and running behind. As I walked, I got a visual image of walking into class late and the embarrassment of it. At this point, I was so used to interpreting visual images as messages from my inner voice that I rendered a translation: “You're going to be laughed at for being late.” Strangely, I got to my class and sat down, just in the nick of time. I wasn’t late at all.

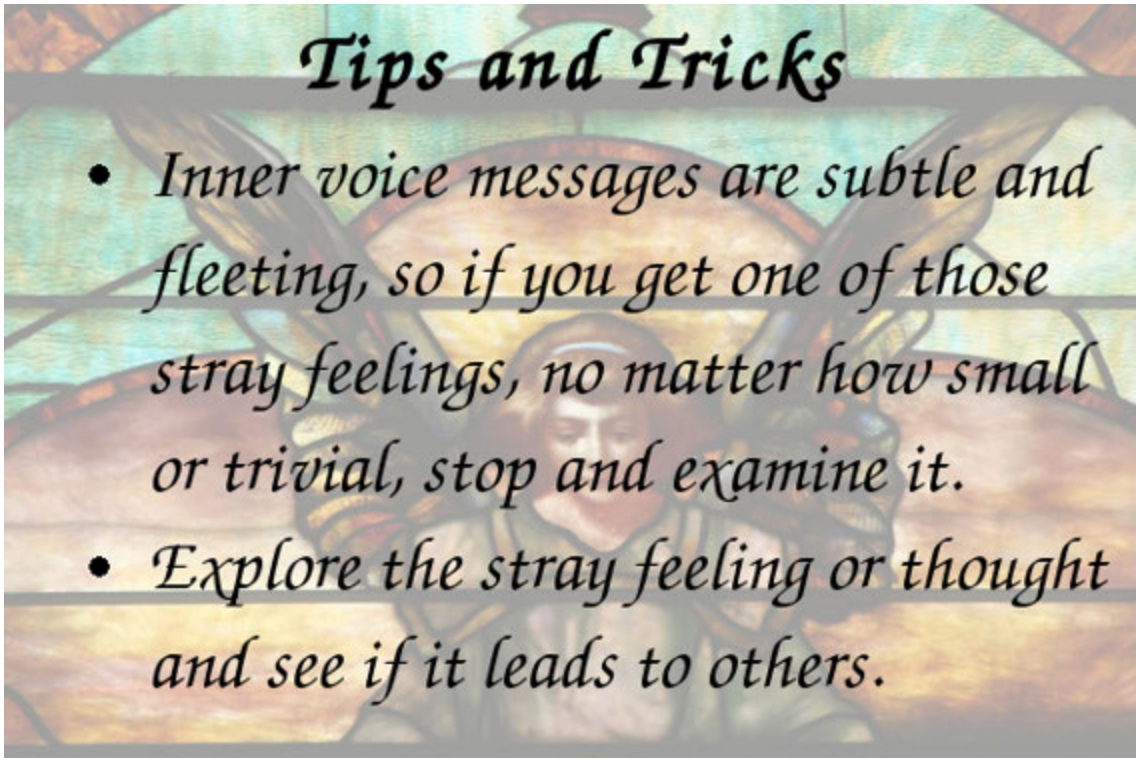
Later, the professor announced that there would be an exam the following week. At once, I got a complex image of sitting in class. On my desk was an exam booklet, completely blank. The clock on the wall showed I only had five minutes left to complete the exam. There was a blank look on my face. The message was clear: I was going to fail the exam. Horrified, I worried about it for the rest of the week.

As I walked to my bus stop later that evening, I got another visual image. This time, it was my bus pulling away and I was desperately running after it in vain. I was going to miss the bus. I ignored the image and continued to walk. When I got to the stop, there was no bus in sight, so it looked as though I had indeed missed it. Then, off in the distance, my bus came lumbering into sight and I got on without a problem. Oh well, I thought. Nobody can be one hundred percent accurate; maybe I was just having an “off” day.

I continued to be bothered by these occasional negative images of failure, embarrassment, weakness. Time after time, they were wrong. A week later, I took my physics exam and while I didn’t “ace” the test, I certainly didn't fail it either.

That’s when it dawned on me: it's possible to get visual images, thoughts and feelings without them coming from my inner voice. I had inadvertently discovered there was another “voice” inside of me: the voice of insecurity, doubt and fear. This new voice manifested images in a way similar to my inner voice, but the messages were negative and pessimistic rather than positive and optimistic. I decided to call it the “voice of fear.”

Perhaps it's more accurate to say that I was getting thoughts and images from one source: my subconscious, but the subconscious is a fountainhead for all sorts of things, from genuine psychic information to irrational fears. It can channel deep inner wisdom but also ugly self-doubts.


Tips and Tricks
• Inner voice messages are subtle and fleeting, so if you get one of those stray feelings, no matter how small or trivial, stop and examine it.
• Explore the stray feeling or thought and see if it leads to others.

Subconscious doubts and fears can control you and make you do irrational things, so it's important to learn how to tell the difference between the two.

It's not always easy because the communications channel is not always clear. Sometimes you're distracted or in the wrong frame of mind, so it's hard to tell the legitimate inner voice communications from the voice of fear.

One problem is that the same set of images might be interpreted in two different ways. For example, suppose I got a visual image of my dad collapsing in a heap on the floor, clutching his chest. If it came from my inner voice, it might be a message for me to hurry home and check on him before it's too late; I might save his life. But if it came from the voice of fear, it was just nonsense, a manifestation of my subconscious fears: I'm worried about his health.

Acting on every fear and insecurity makes for one hell of a messed up, neurotic person. So clearly I needed to learn the difference between messages I could ignore and those I shouldn't.

Tips and Tricks
• Is it the voice of fear?
• Are negative emotions attached?
• Are positive emotions attached?
• Ignore messages accompanied by uncomfortable feelings.

Readers of my first book may remember this incident: One day I took a bus from St. Paul to Minneapolis after work. As I sat on the bus I thought about many things, but the main thought that kept nagging me the whole way home was: “If this bus crashes, the more tense I am, the more I’d get hurt… I'd better relax more, in case we get in an accident.” The thoughts kept nagging me until I decided to pursue them. I thought about the prospect of my bus getting in an accident. I kept reassuring myself, “It's just like the physics test: you're just worrying. No way could it happen.” But the thought kept nagging at me. I looked to see how cushioned I'd be if the bus were to get into an accident. I was sitting sideways, next to another man who would cushion me. I looked around to see how everyone else was cushioned. There was only one person better-cushioned than I. I thought about an accident for about five to ten minutes. Then the bus rear-ended a car. As far as I could tell, no one in the bus was hurt. The police arrived and the passengers were eventually shuffled onto a different bus.

Tips and Tricks
• Don't ignore "nagging thoughts" or repeated feelings, especially ones like "I should really make that doctor's appointment."

As I rode home on that second bus I started thinking: This wasn't idle worrying. This was not the voice of fear; this was a warning from my inner voice about the impending accident.

The difference, it turns out, is whether or not negative emotions are attached to the images. The voice of fear is always accompanied by emotions that make you uncomfortable: anxiety, fear, worrying, self-doubt and insecurity. Communications from my inner voice are far less emotional. They come from a place of stillness and quietness, often with a sense of inner peace. Sometimes they're accompanied by a mild sense of emotion: mirth, humor, or an inner smile of knowing—the kind you'd see on a statue of Buddha, Christ or Ganesha—but never an uncomfortable feeling. The bus incident was not a frantic “Oh my God, what if the bus hits a car?” It was calm, analytical, even a little dispassionate. “Oh, by the way...just an FYI here...Your bus is going to collide with a car...” And the message was repeated.

The next question was: if the important messages from my inner voice are dispassionate and almost unemotional, what if my inner voice needed to convey something really important, something that is naturally emotional for me? Something like my dad having a heart attack.

There are two issues here: The ability of my inner voice to convey importance and my ability to separate my own emotional emphasis on any particular impression.

For the first issue, suppose we're talking about a real person, like my sister: If my sister tells me that dad is having a heart attack, she's upset. Her emotions are obvious in her voice (the tone, the speed, the pitch), and her body language (her flailing arms, raised shoulders, teary eyes). If my inner voice is unemotional, how can it place emphasis on what's happening like my sister can? After all, it has no body language and doesn't attach any emotions. The answer is: it repeats itself. That image of my dad will be repeated over and over rapidly. It's that "nagging thought" you can't get rid of in the back of your mind. "By the way...By the way...By the way..."The image will be repeated over and over, but without negative emotions attached.

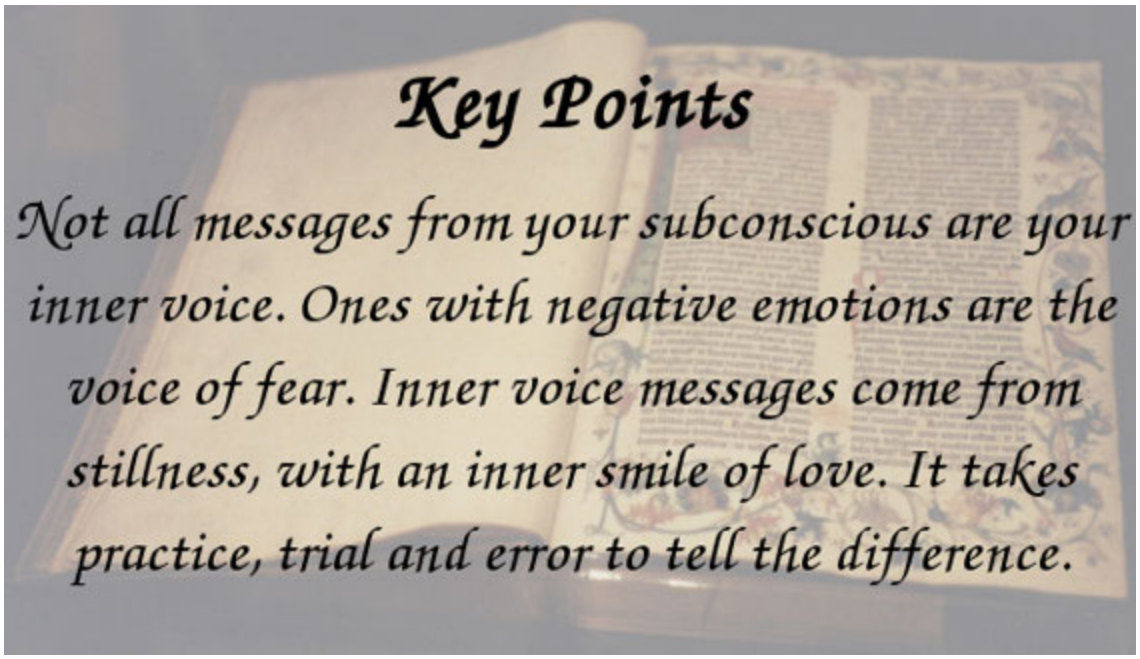
You have to be careful here, because fears can repeat too: "What if dad's in trouble? Oh my God, what if dad is in trouble? It would be so awful. What if dad's in trouble?"

To make matters more complicated, a genuine psychic impression can trigger an emotional response. And that brings me to the second issue I wrote about: Thinking about my dad having a heart attack is by its nature emotional. The very thought upsets me and makes me worry. If I get that

image, even if it's a psychic one, I react to it emotionally. Then I might start worrying and repeating it myself: “What if dad's in trouble?”

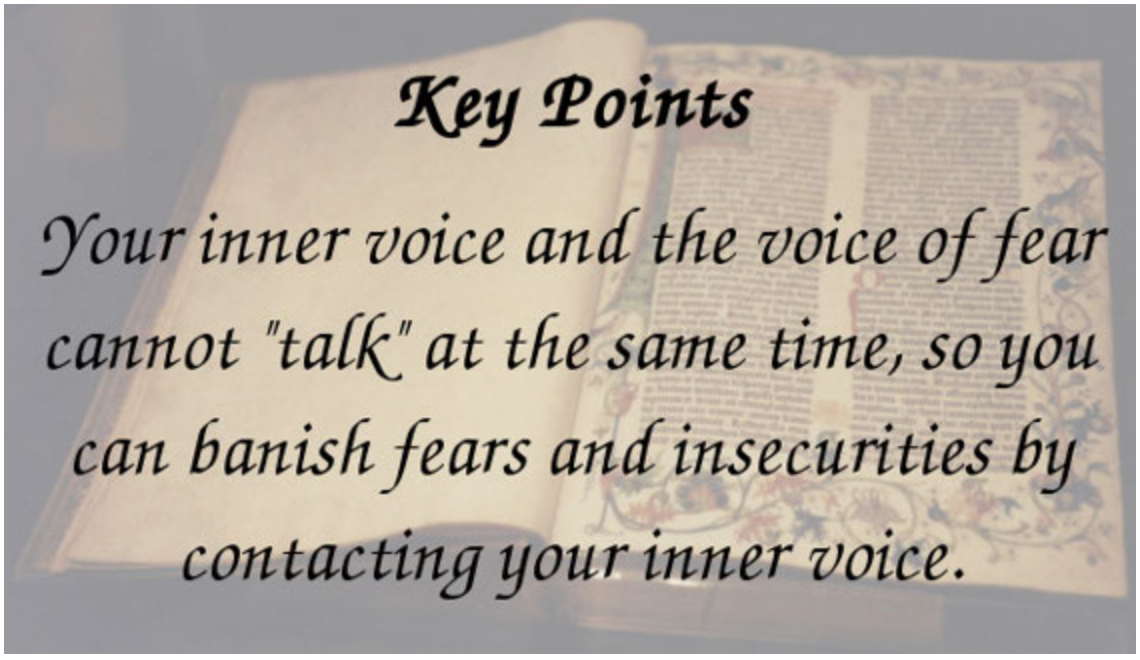
So first you need to carefully examine how the original impressions or images came to you. Did they come with emotions attached? Or did they come without emotions? Did you attach emotions to it afterward?

Now you might be wondering: why is the inner voice emotionless? Because your inner voice comes from a quiet, meditative place; a place of inner stillness and peace. This is the part of you that remains calm and centered even if the world is crumbling around you. My theory is that negative emotions like fear are almost always caused by attachment. For example, if you’re not attached to physical objects, you have no fear of losing them, anger when they’re stolen or sadness when they’re absent. In Buddhism, followers are taught to gain awareness and enlightenment by getting rid of attachment. This is your inner Buddha or inner Christ talking from a perspective of non-attachment.


Key Points
Not all messages from your subconscious are your inner voice. Ones with negative emotions are the voice of fear. Inner voice messages come from stillness, with an inner smile of love. It takes practice, trial and error to tell the difference.

After having trained myself to pay attention to my innermost images, feelings and thoughts and interpreting them as messages, I refined my method: I learned to pay attention to the communications to see whether they came with emotions or whether I had injected my own fears. And when the voice of fear tries to rattle my composure, I close my eyes, take a deep breath and try to meditate to return to a place of peace. It wasn't easy but I eventually got the hang of it and it improved my interpretation of my inner voice. I was getting better at the game.

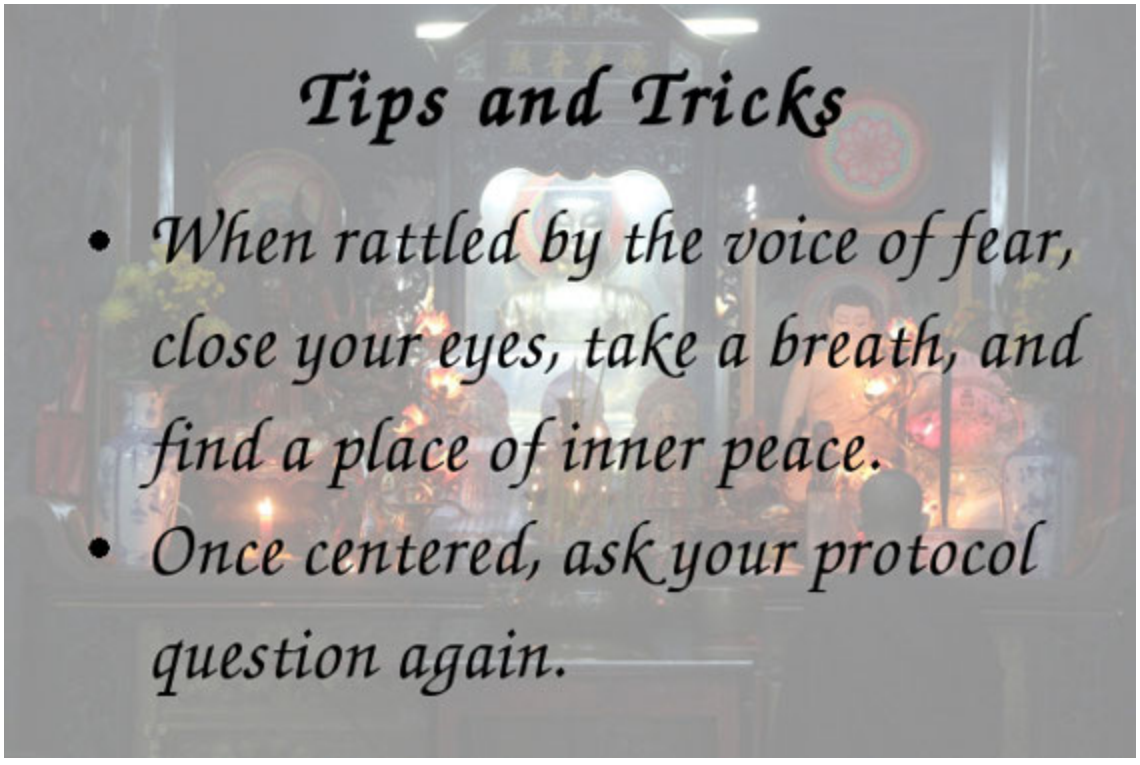
I also noticed that my inner voice and the voice of fear could not “talk” at the same time. That's important because it means you can banish the voice of fear simply by communicating with your inner voice.


Key Points
Your inner voice and the voice of fear cannot "talk" at the same time, so you can banish fears and insecurities by contacting your inner voice.

Let's look at a practical example. Suppose you get images from your subconscious that you interpret as “You're going to be late for class.” If the message was accompanied by a feeling of insecurity (Maybe you felt a tiny bit afraid or worried, or felt like squirming). If so, it's the voice of fear.

So what can you do to clear up communications? I've found that the best course of action is not to ignore the stray thought, but to acknowledge it and tell yourself, “It's mental noise; I'll deal with that thought later.” Then, take a cleansing breath, try to quiet your mind, and ask your protocol question: “What is love?” and wait for the answer.

What if it responds to your question with images that indicate you forgot to do all your homework? The first clue is that it didn't mention anything about what you asked about: love. The second clue is in whether that thought made you uncomfortable before or after it arrived. Take another breath, try to quiet your mind, then ask again. “What is love?”


Tips and Tricks
When rattled by the voice of fear, close your eyes, take a breath, and find a place of inner peace.
Once centered, ask your protocol question again.

Here's another trick: it's often helpful to ask the same question multiple times as a form of verification. For example, suppose you're trying to find a place to park. You think to yourself, Gee, I wonder if there's more likely to be a parking space if I turn to the left or turn to the right?”Next, let's say you get a quick hunch that indicates “Left.” Let's also suppose that the flash

is so weak that you can't tell whether it was your inner voice or just some subconscious nonsense: Oh no, don't turn right because it's a bad place: you once got a parking ticket on that street.

In that situation it's best to outright ask your inner voice for verification: “Should I turn left?” then wait for the answer. I'll get a simple “Yes” or “No” answer. Ask a second and third time to make sure the answer is consistent.

If talking to your inner voice is difficult or you're struggling to get an answer, it helps to simplify your questions. A question like “Which way should I turn?” requires a slightly more complex answer than a simple yes/no questions like “Should I turn left?” So keep it simple.

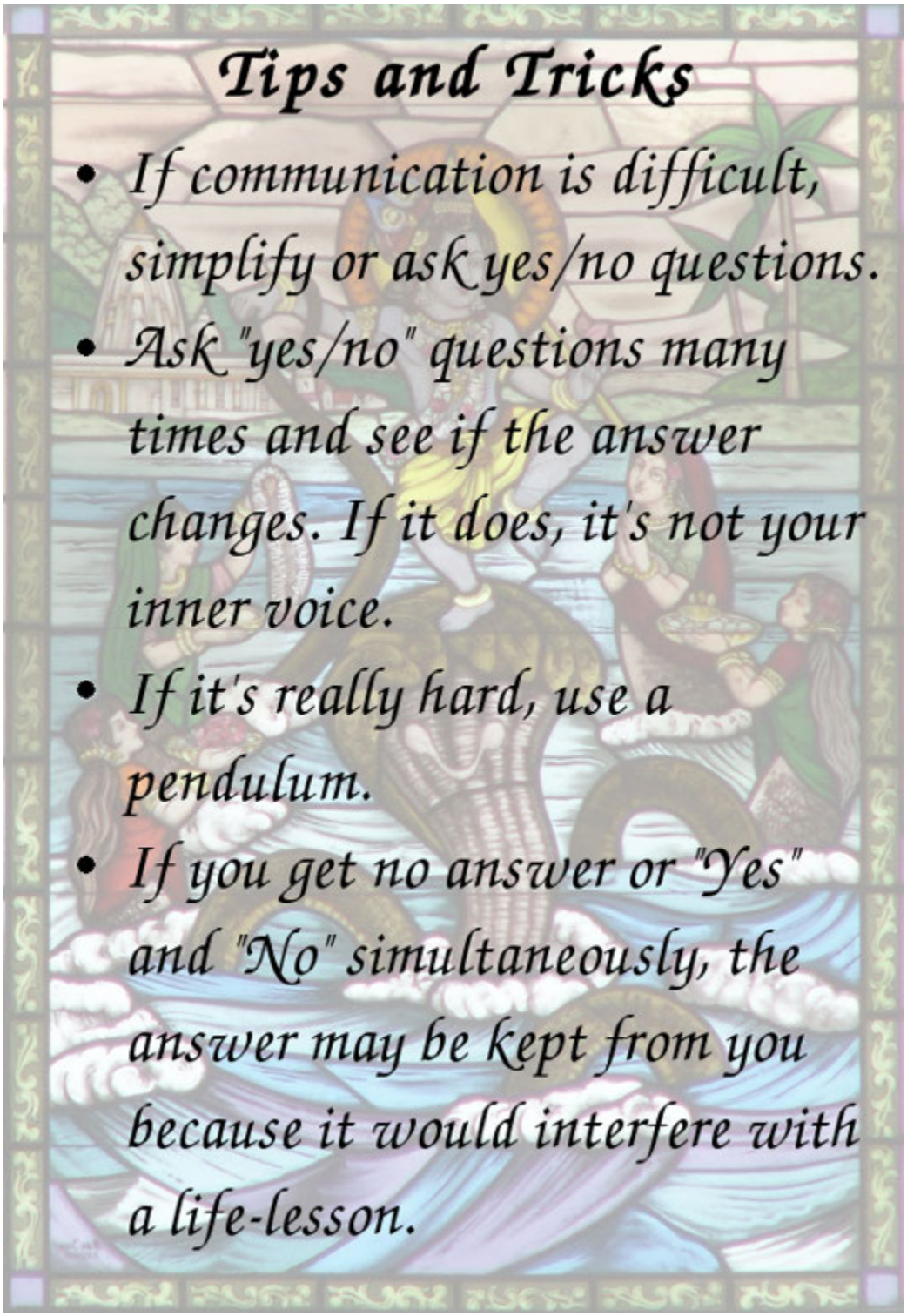
Here's another tip: repeat the same yes/no question multiple times. The voice of fear comes from a place of insecurity, so its answer may change. It may answer “yes” three times and “no” on the fourth. Your inner voice won't change yes/no answers no matter how many times you ask.

When you're adept at inner voice communications, you can ask it outright, but while you are learning the process, try this: Visualize the first option, then the second. Between each visualization, pause and see if either of those options stand out in your mind. If none stand out, do it again.

My inner voice has infinite patience, so it doesn't mind if I ask it to repeat and/or elaborate on any topic. Use that to your advantage.

Also, please bear in mind that it might not be wise to do this kind of visualization and mind-blanking while you're driving until you've learned how to speed up the process. For God's sake, we don't need any more distracted drivers on the road.

One easy way to tap into your subconscious until you get the hang of actually talking to your inner voice is to use a pendulum to answer yes/no questions. There's nothing magical or supernatural about pendulums: All you have to do is ask your question, then try to hold the pendulum perfectly still. After a while your subconscious will cause it to swing a tiny amount. The swinging will normally drift to one direction: if it swings toward you and back, that means “yes.” If it swings from side-to-side, that means “no.”


Tips and Tricks
If communication is difficult, simplify or ask yes/no questions.
Ask "yes/no" questions many times and see if the answer changes. If it does, it's not your inner voice.
If it's really hard, use a pendulum.
If you get no answer or "Yes" and "No" simultaneously, the answer may be kept from you because it would interfere with a life-lesson.

You may be wondering how the voice of fear infiltrated your awareness. The answer is: it's something that your body does naturally. It's hard-wired into your brain. The bottom line is that subconscious fears are the product

of millions of years of human evolution. Fear has an important purpose: it helps in self-preservation.

Think of it this way: Fifty thousand years ago, the cavemen who were fearless and walked boldly into every cave were sometimes mauled to death by the bears or tigers who slept there. Their genes were taken out of the gene pool. The other cavemen, who had that uncomfortable subconscious feeling and a solid fear of the unknown, approached the cave with more caution. They're the ones who survived and that trait was passed on to their children in their genes, and eventually to you. Lucky you: now you have to overcome it.

Let's Play!
Examining Emotions With Impressions
When you catch a stray thought, examine whether or not it came to you with emotions attached. In that way, learn to distinguish between messages from the voice of fear and messages from your inner voice.

Musical Interlude #4

“Magnum Opus” by Kansas

The song “Magnum Opus” by Kansas is another of my favorite songs. I love it for its variety and complexity. Like many of the songs I love, it changes speed and tempo several times throughout the song, and it moves distinct musical parts from ear to ear.

Again, it's not meditation music in the traditional sense. It's rock and roll. Not just ordinary rock, but “progressive rock” which means it changes themes, tempos and pitch erratically at times. But it's very creative, and following it with your mind can actually increase your psychic abilities.

Close your eyes, listen to the song under headphones and try to follow the musical threads as they move from ear to ear.

Chapter 15

“So if you think your life is complete confusion

Because you never win the game

Just remember that it's a grand illusion

And deep inside we're all the same”

--Styx, “The Grand Illusion”

The Grand Illusion

“What's today's lesson?” I asked.

“Today, imagine you are a song that God sings. Bear in mind that your tempo, pitch, complexity, richness, texture all affect the people around you. Will you be a Rondo? A ballad that tells a tale? A symphony of emotions? A heavy metal earth-shaking power-play?”

I had to look “Rondo” up in the dictionary. I'm sure I had heard the term before, but wasn't quite sure what it meant. It’s a musical form that is often the last movement of a sonata. It always felt odd when my inner voice used unfamiliar words.

I noticed that my inner voice could only communicate to me using images, ideas and words that were already in my vocabulary, even if they weren't readily accessible to me. It would never make analogies using references from obscure branches of science, just as it wouldn't speak to me in Spanish. The trick was to expand and enrich its vocabulary. I found a perfect way to do that: Music.

For one particular class, I found myself confused by the textbook on the day of a mid-term exam. Normally, I spent hours nervously studying for tests, but this time I felt completely lost and had just stopped studying. I had quickly skimmed the class materials then given up in disgust and listened to "The Grand Illusion" by Styx on my Sony Walkman instead. I just didn't care anymore if people thought I was a failure.

The following week, the test scores were posted on the wall outside the professor's office. I sheepishly looked for my name. Running my finger across the paper, I found my test score: I got a B! I was ecstatic. But...I hadn't studied.

I really envied my buddy John G., who was a year younger than me. We had gone to the same high school and were now at college together. John was one of those "smart kids." He had a perfect 4.0 grade point average and aced every test he took. What really pissed me off is that he didn't even seem to try. I'd hang on every word the teacher said, take copious notes and study for hours on end. Meanwhile, John slept through class half the time and barely seemed to pay attention. He spent more time listening to records than studying. In fact, John was the guy who first introduced me to the music of Styx and other bands.

People assumed that I was super-smart because I was a computer whiz-kid. I wish! Unlike my brother Joe and sister Cathy who got straight “A's” in school, I had to work hard for every “B” I got, much to the disappointment of my teachers who expected me to be as smart as my siblings.

I was okay at physics in high school but in college I really struggled. I knew full well it wasn't my skill or knowledge that carried me through that test, so getting a “B” without studying was unusual and I couldn't imagine why.

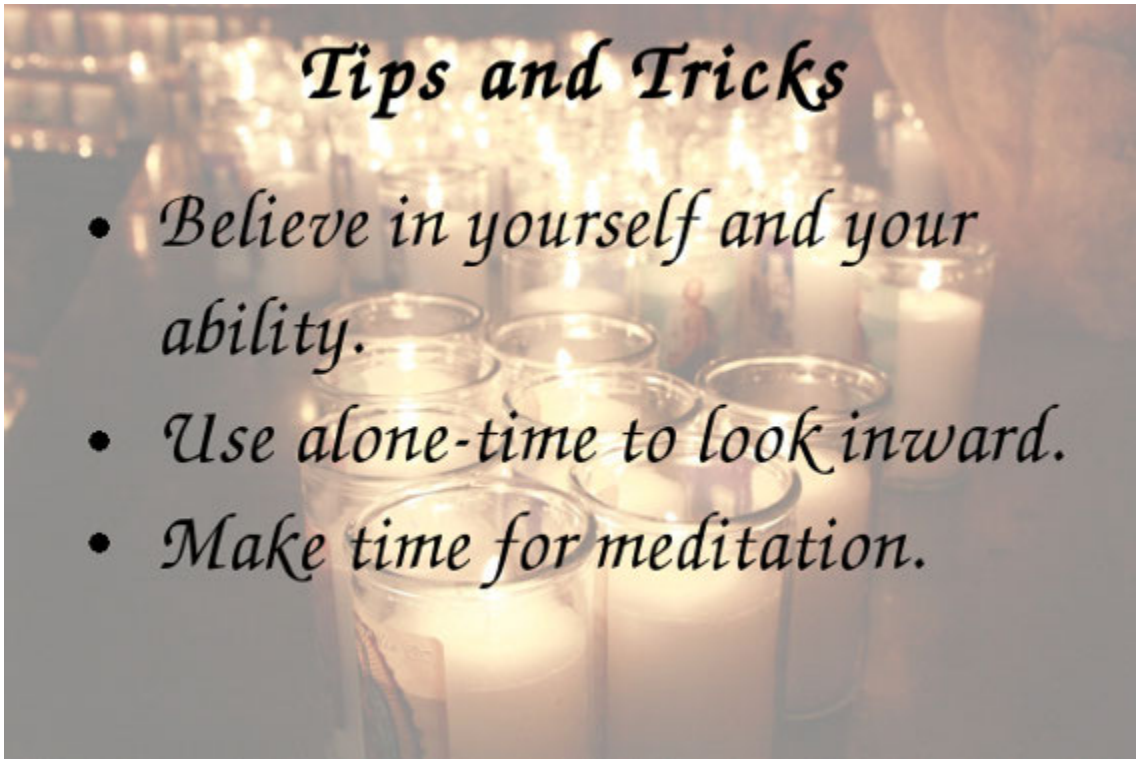
The next time I had a big test, I tried an experiment: Like a good aficionado of science, I tried to replicate the conditions of the math test: I studied marginally, but then just before the test I gave myself an extra couple of hours just to listen to Styx. I passed that test too.

A strange pattern emerged: I did better on exams if I listened to Styx an hour or so before the test. The difference, of course, was my attitude. The music gave me a good I-don't-give-a-damn feeling about the test or pleasing others. The more indignant and self-confident I got, the better I seemed to do.

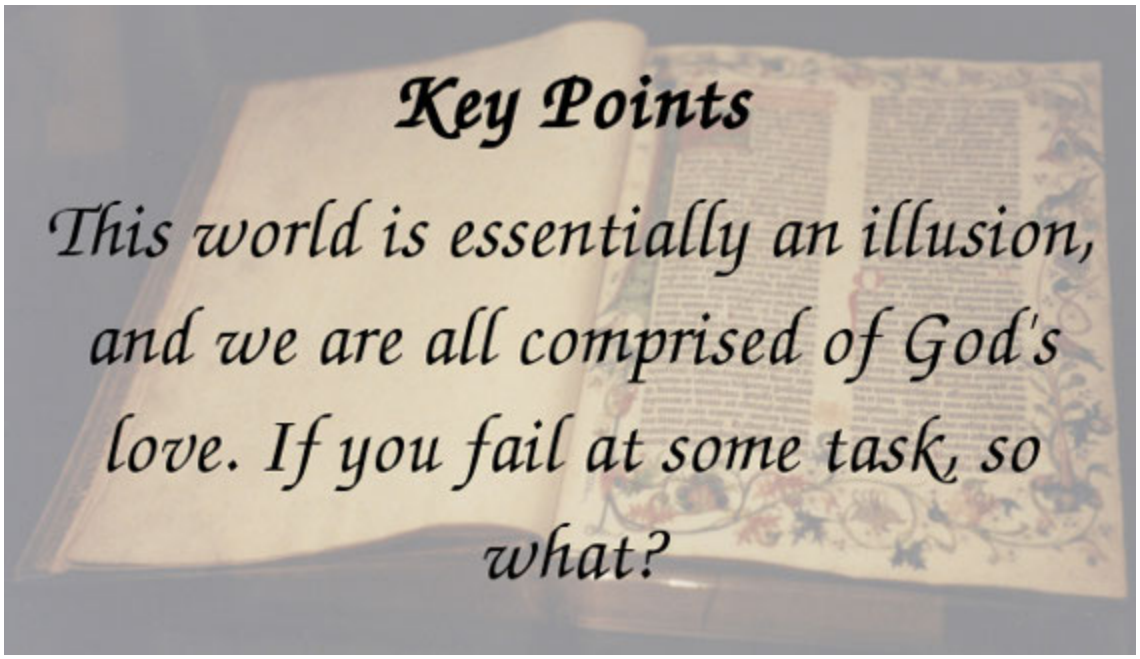
The Styx songs had several benefits. First, most of the music switched from ear-to-ear. Each of my ears would hear a different thing and my brain had to make a cohesive whole from it. In musical interlude #1, I talked about how Robert Monroe discovered that playing different tones in each ear had many benefits.

The second benefit was in Styx's message itself. There were songs like “I'm okay” and “Superstars” to bolster my self-image and self-confidence. “Blue

Collar Man” bolstered my self-determination. “Sing for the Day” brought me joy and a positive attitude, and of course there was the title track from “The Grand Illusion” that I quoted at the start of the chapter.



I do believe this world is an illusion, a dream in the mind of God, so we shouldn’t sweat the small stuff—like that physics test. What matters is who you are inside and what you learn along the road. I also believe that we're all the same. We're all comprised of God's eternal love. Fully realizing that unlocks everything.



The third Styx benefit is derived from the song “Man In The Wilderness,” which portrays aloneness. I don't exactly know why, but loneliness can be a powerful tool. Maybe it's not loneliness as much as solitude: when we're in a relationship, we can get too distracted to focus on spiritual things. The physical can starve the spiritual side of our beings. When we make time to be alone, we have more time for introspection and meditation.

Eventually I developed a special collection of songs that I called my “pre-test mix.” I started using it before every test and my test scores improved dramatically. I'd like to think that the secret of John G.'s success was his listening to the right music. Well, that and he probably stayed up until three in the morning studying when nobody was looking!

As I started listening to more music, like my pre-test mix, it started affecting my inner voice. It opened up a whole new kind of dialog.

Let's Play!
Self-Confidence
Listen to music that bolsters your self-confidence, self-worth, and self-determination. Listen to music with an attitude that it doesn't matter what other people think because it's okay to be yourself.

Chapter 16

“Music holds the secret,

To know it can make you whole

It's not just a game of notes,

It's the songs inside your soul”

--Triumph, “Magic Power”

Musical Vocabulary

I’ve always been a music lover. When I'm not listening to music, I'll often have songs running through my head anyway. In high school, the only band I followed was The Beatles. As I passed into adulthood, my taste in music expanded to other rock bands. The second band I liked was Yes. I liked their driving bass guitar on songs like “Roundabout.” Now that I was into out-of-body and psychic experiences, I appreciated “Yes” for their spiritual side. Their songs were relatable and their poetry contained deep, cryptic wisdom.

After Yes, I found myself enamored with groups like Kansas, Styx, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin and a few others. With the onset of my OBEs, I started noticing how seemingly ordinary rock and roll songs used mystical lyrics that reminded me of my out-of-body travels. Suddenly, I was listening to more music and paying more attention to the lyrics.

That had an up-side and a down-side. The down-side was that the music distracted me and drowned out my inner voice. The up-side was that my inner voice started using song snippets to communicate as well as the visual images, ideas and words I described before. It also expanded its vocabulary greatly when music wasn't playing. Instead of using complex imagery it could sum up a whole feeling in a few notes of a song. And every week I kept adding new songs to its vocabulary.

One day I felt discouraged. I still had years of classes before I could get my degree in Computer Science from the University, and it all seemed overwhelming. College was so tedious it seemed like an enormous roadblock. My computer classes were boring because I already knew the material. My other classes were worse: I just couldn't see how it applied to my adult life and I began to wonder: Was college just a waste of time? Weren't my spiritual pursuits more important? I began to question if college was worth it, just to obtain that stupid piece of paper called a diploma. I decided to ask my inner voice. I still started out with my protocol question: "What is love?"

"Love is the eternal song of God."

Communication was established. I remembered the test day's "lesson du jour": that we are songs that God sings. Surely this was a contradiction! I argued back, "I thought you said that I was a song that God sings."

"Yes, of course, and you are comprised of God's love. You just haven't realized it yet."

Somehow it always seemed to weasel its way out of challenges like that. I dropped it and started asking questions. “Should I stay in college?”

In a very short burst of information, my inner voice sent me a few bars of music from a familiar Kansas song. The translation was unmistakable: “Carry on my wayward son. There’ll be peace when you are done.”

I didn’t actually hear the song. It was more like the song ran through my mind like a memory. I argued, “But shouldn’t we live each day like it’s our last?” I used a quote from one of my philosophy classes. “Don’t they say ‘Carpe’ Diem’–seize the day? I feel like I’m wasting my time going to school when I could be doing something more important.”

The reply was another song snippet, about six notes of music, from one of the solo albums of Yes's lead singer, Jon Anderson. “Do not regret a moment living out your life.”

I argued back. “But I just don’t see the point. I feel like I’m wasting years of my life at college for some stupid piece of paper when I could be out living my life.”

Again, it countered with a song. This time I received notes from a song called “Love Is” by Jon and Vangelis. The accompanying lyrics were, “Take heart my good friend, your time is waiting. No thoughts of sadness...”

The lyrics that followed in that song were also powerful: “Of all the feelings, there’s one that matters: the gift of loving. The gift of love is calling you.”That wasn't part of its message, but I remembered the quote nonetheless.

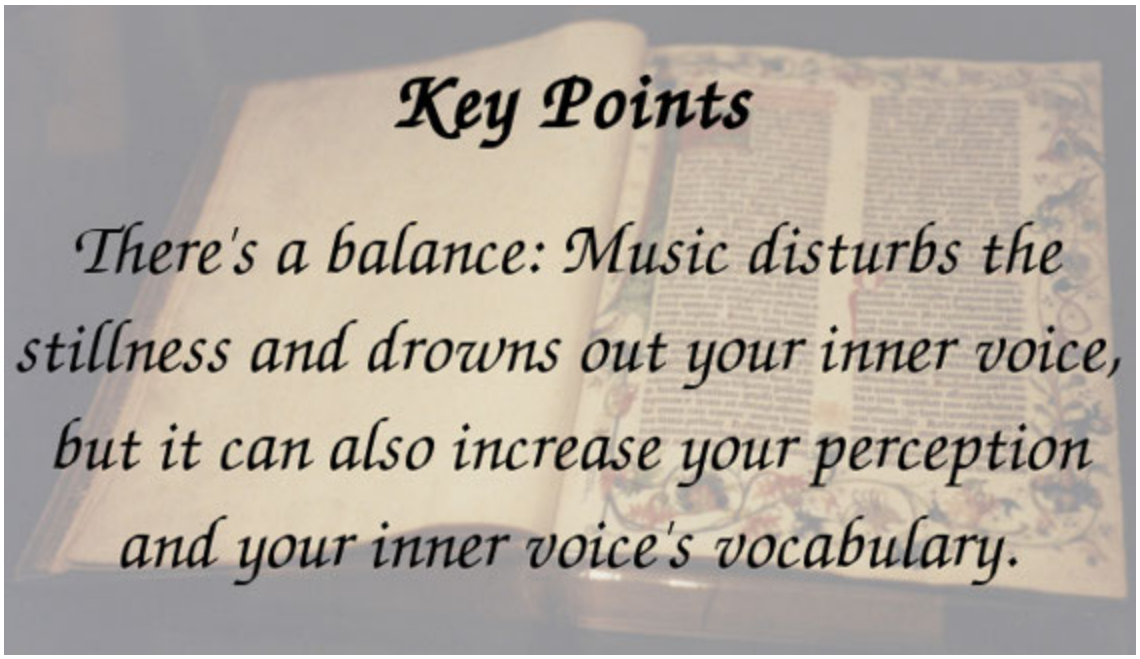
From then on I tried to pay attention to songs that ran through my head. Sometimes, it was my inner voice preempting the protocol, and often it would be in the form of a lesson. I decided to take the advice of my inner guidance counselor and stay in college. Good call.

As time went on, I discovered that my inner voice often gave me messages by excerpting several small song segments and stringing them together to form complete sentences.

As I got better at paying attention to the songs inside my head, my inner voice learned to send me song snippets with the words slightly altered. For example, I'd receive the thought of Brad Delp singing a classic Boston song, but the lyrics would be slightly altered to fit the situation: Instead of the actual song lyrics, “It’s been such a long time, I think I should be going.” I’d get a slightly altered version: “It's been such a long time, I think you should be going.”

Other times, I would mentally get a few bars of music in my head and would wrack my brain for twenty minutes to remember what song it was and the lyrics. As odd as it sounded, I was playing “Name That Tune” with myself and my inner voice’s message was imparted by the songs.

You probably won't hear your inner voice while listening to music, but you may still benefit from it afterward for two reasons: First, some music (like my “musical interlude” exercises) can open the gates of psychic perception. Second, it enriches your inner voice's vocabulary and allows it to communicate in a much easier way.


Key Points
There's a balance: Music disturbs the stillness and drowns out your inner voice, but it can also increase your perception and your inner voice's vocabulary.

Some people say that a picture is worth a thousand words. Although my OBE practice had taught me how to visualize well, I was still more an auditory than a visual person. And to me, a few well-placed musical notes are worth at least a couple hundred words.

In case you were wondering: In all the years I've been doing this, the most repeated song lyric from my inner voice is from a Yes song called “Into The Lens.” The lyric is: “This to just remind you: All is meant to be.”

Let's Play!
Finding Symbols in Music
Pay attention to the songs you hear on the radio and elsewhere. What are they telling you?
Pay more attention to the songs that run through your head: they could be messages from your subconscious.

Psychic Sensitivity Exercise #4

Third Eye Exercise

Get into a comfortable position where you can safely close your eyes, preferably sitting up. Extend the index finger of your favorite hand as if you're about to point to something nearby.

Next, close your eyes and point your index finger directly at your “third eye” area, the location between your eyebrows. Hold your finger about a half-inch (about one centimeter) from your face.

Don't use or move your eyes, but instead, focus your attention on your third eye and pretend that energy is extending from that area. It's okay to open your eyes once in a while to make sure your finger is still centered between your eyebrows. Hold your finger there for fifteen seconds or so.

Once you can feel the energy between your eyebrows, slowly move your hand slightly to the left and to the right and see if you can feel the third eye energy following your finger. Once you can feel the energy moving with your finger, try moving it slightly up and down or in a circle.

Next, with your finger centered between the eyebrows again, slowly pull it further away so that it's one inch (about 2.5 centimeters) away from your face. Hold your finger there for fifteen seconds more.

Next, pull your finger slowly away from your third eye, then push it back close again.

Now, with your finger still pointing between your eyebrows, imagine an invisible force is gently squeezing the third-eye energy on both sides. It is as if there are two more index fingers pointing at each other, on either side of your third eye energy. Just to be clear: If the fingers were real and you were looking down from above, you would see a cross or an "X" with four parts: the bridge of your nose would be one, your index finger would be the second, and the two invisible fingers would be the others.

Next, imagine that as the invisible fingers gently apply pressure, your third eye energy extends outward.

Lastly, take your hand away and try to maintain that feeling of the energy extending from your third eye.

I'm not sure why it works, but this exercise also helps me to maintain focus and be more psychic throughout the day.

Chapter 17

“Look inside of yourself,

You might see someone you don't know,

Maybe that's just what you need,

Letting the river in you flow.”

--Ronnie James Dio, “Caught in the Middle”

Humor

Even if my inner voice was dispassionate and came from a place of stillness, it still had a sense of humor. One day I was lying in bed, trying to focus my mind to induce another out-of-body experience, when my inner voice sent me a well-known song with the lyrics switched:

“My body lies over the ocean, My body lies over the sea, My body lies over the ocean, Oh bring back my body to me.”

I just about split a gut laughing and had to give up on inducing any OBEs that day. The original lyric, of course, is “My bonnie,” a Scottish term of endearment.

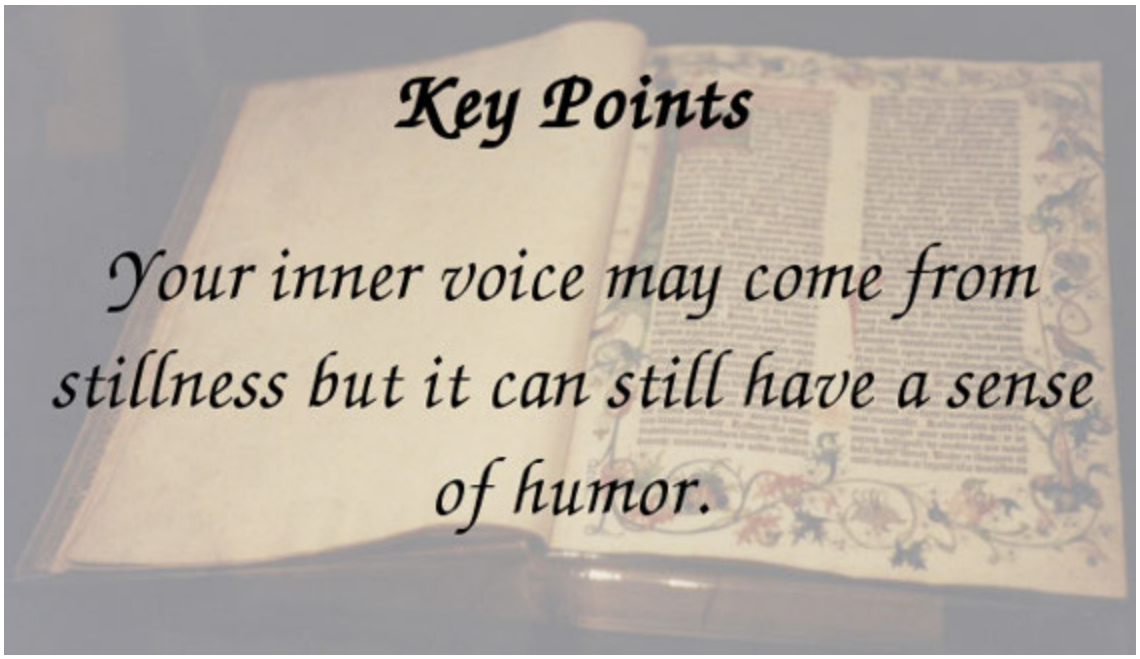
Another day, I silently initiated my protocol. “What is love?”

“Love is the flower of existence.” There was a slight pause, then it said, “It's also the flour of existence.”

That was a fun play on words. Flour is the raw material that comprises bread. The double meaning was something unexpected, and both meanings made sense.

Another time, while riding the bus, I asked it to “Say something wise” and it responded with this:

“As every lake is fed by a stream or a spring, so every person is fed by God inside, for God is the wellspring of all beings. Likewise, lakes have streams or springs flowing from them. So, too, every person has a channel for God to flow outward to others. And as all the fish in a lake depend on the flow of water from the spring to the exit, so it is with people. Therefore, let God flow freely from within. Accept God's love into your heart and let it flow freely out to others.”



At first the message seemed very serious and somber, but then, as before, there was a slight pause, and it continued. “Otherwise you’re dammed!”

The play on words—”dammed” versus “damned”—was so subtle and so funny that I nearly broke out laughing aloud on the bus. I quickly put my hand to my mouth and pretended to cough to cover my laugh. I looked around the bus, hoping that the men in the white coats were far, far away.

It is wrong to say my inner voice was developing a personality or a unique identity. Still, it was humorous.

One morning, I lost track of time as I was recording an OBE in my journal. When I realized I was late, I left in a hurry. I bolted out the door and started running toward my bus, when my inner voice suddenly interrupted, “Hey, Bob, you forgot to lock the door.” I ran back, locked the door, and thanked it. It jokingly replied, “You'd forget your body if it wasn't attached!”

Another day it exuberantly ran the Judas Priest song Tyrant by me, substituting the word “love” for “tyrant,” which turned the song into a tongue-in-cheek lesson: “Love, captor of humanity. Love, conqueror of all. Love, hideous destructor. Love, every man shall fall.” When I got “hideous destructor” I got the concept of the destruction of barriers. In retrospect, this was similar to the Hindu concept of the god Shiva, who is described as a force that dispels the illusions of life and tears down walls.

I began to feel like I was in one of those cartoons where a tiny angel and devil were sitting on my shoulders, giving me advice. My dad always said I had my grandfather's quirky sense of humor, but now I wondered: Was my grandfather following me around in spirit? I sure hoped so!

Throughout the years, my inner voice has not lost its sense of humor. Fast-forward to 2011. I took a liking to the Scottish heavy metal band Alestorm. (What can I say? I have strange tastes). All of their songs were about pirates and drinking booze: very humorous to me, since I don't drink much alcohol. One of their songs, called “Rum” extolled the futures of the drink. On one particular occasion, my inner voice substituted the word “love” for the word “rum”: “Love is the power, love is the key, love is the thing that will set us free.” On and on it went. Of course, by then I was used to its antics, so I just smiled.

Let's Play!

Finding Humor

Humor gives you refreshing new ways to see the world. Watch a silly movie like Airplane, Hot Shots, or Top Secret, or a Marx Brothers movie and pay attention to the wordplay. Watch a comedy skit by Gallagher. Later, watch for double-meanings in the things around you. Is the change in your pocket related to the change in your life? Is the bridge you cross related to the bridge to success? Is that light bulb heavy or--you guessed it--light? What can the double-meanings around you tell about your current spiritual situation?

Chapter 18

“So when you hear those voices

Callin' out to you in the night

Listen to your heart

Angels are cryin' out to you

Listen to your heart this time”

--TNT, “Listen to Your Heart”

Dream Guidance

“What's today's lesson?” I asked.

“We focus too intently on this reality. Today, try to unfocus. Think of the world as external; a strange land you're visiting. When looked at objectively, the problems of the world melt away. Pretend you're a stranger to the Earth; a visitor, but with a purpose. Changing perspective expands your mind.”

It reminded me of a song by Electric Light Orchestra called “Mission (A World Record)” and its lyrics, “My orders are to sit here and watch the world go by.” Viewing everything from the perspective of an outsider is

very interesting. You learn not to take life so seriously, to remember that this is just a playground for learning.

As time went on, I incorporated the wisdom game more and more into everyday life. It became part of my thought process. For example, if a friend suggested we go to Perry's Pizza for dinner, before I'd agree, I'd ask my inner voice “Is Perry's Pizza okay?” and wait for a mental thumbs up or down.

One morning I found another use for it; it helped me interpret my dreams. I had a nightmare about being chased by evil spirits. When I woke up I wondered, What the hell was that all about?

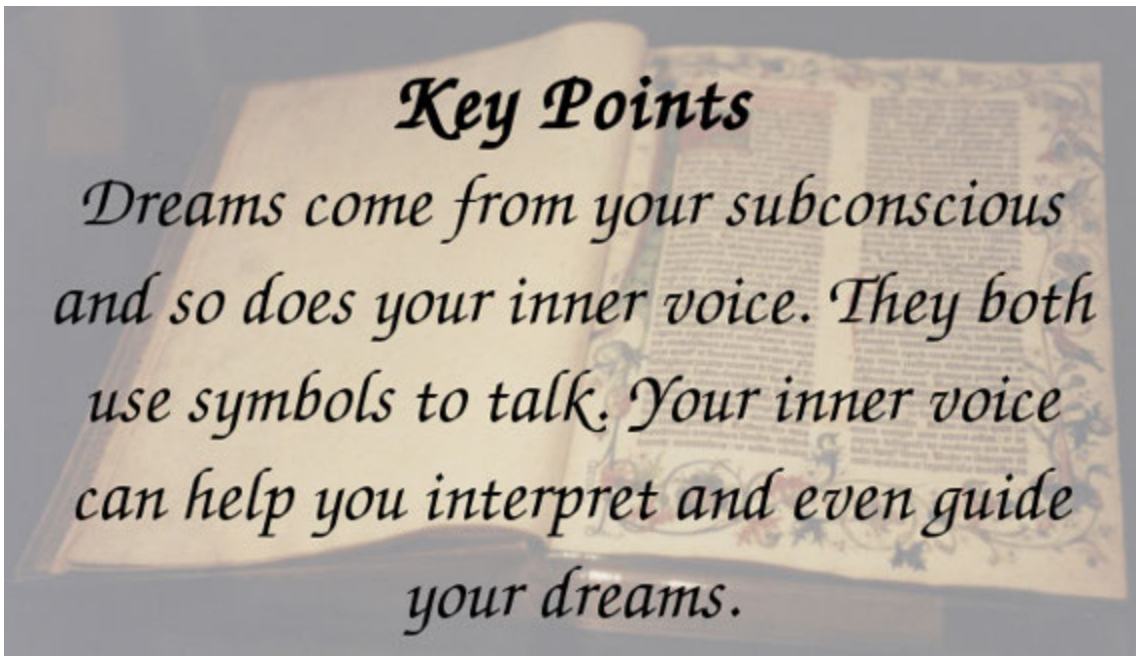
Without prompting, my inner voice spoke up. “You had a nightmare because you've been reading a book[The Wounded Land by Stephen R. Donaldson] in which one of the characters [Joan] becomes possessed. The dream was merely a projection of that fear.”

I went over the dream in my mind and wondered about each little detail. As I did, my inner voice explained each symbol and what it meant. I had discovered my own inner psychoanalyst!

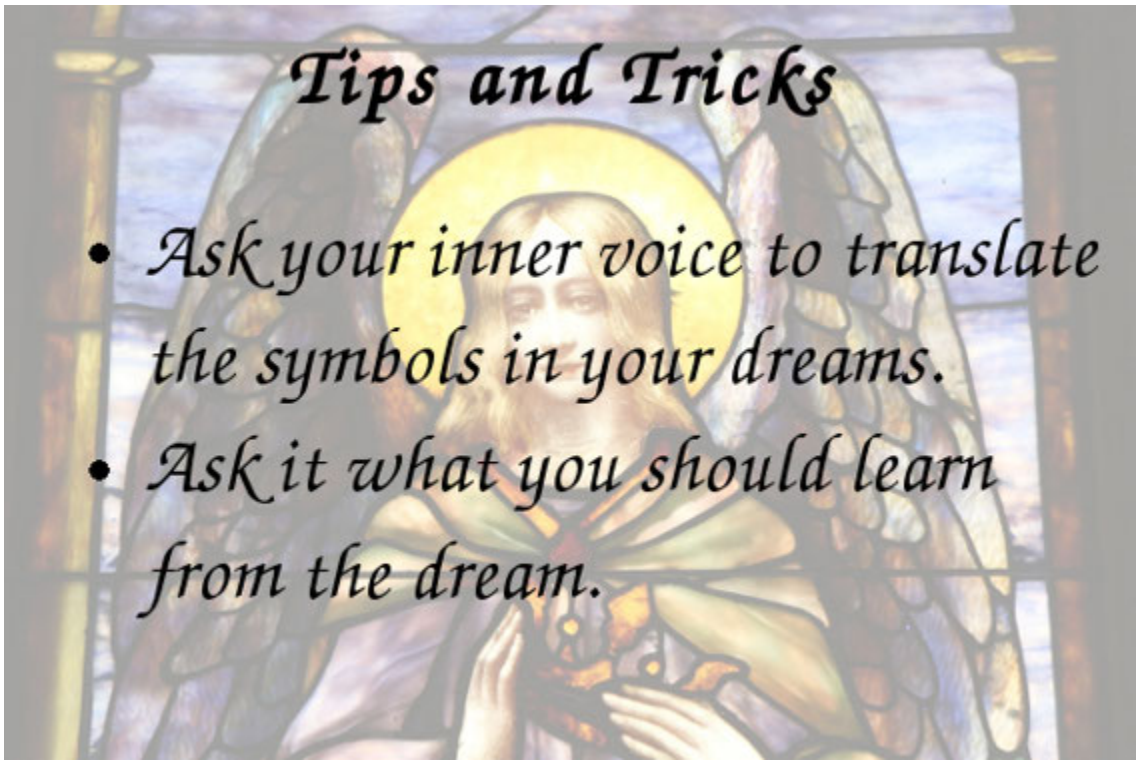
Psychologists say that dreams are a product of the subconscious, so who better to ask than my own inner voice?

Then, as my inner voice became even more ingrained, it started to enter my dreams.

One night I had a dream about being chased by an angry mob. Terrified, I ran north down Fillmore street and cut left on 26thavenue, trying to lose them. My heart was pounding and I paused to catch my dream-breath. I needed to run, but I didn't know which direction was safest. Out of habit, I asked my inner voice, “Which way?” It said, “North again, down the alley.”


Key Points
Dreams come from your subconscious and so does your inner voice. They both use symbols to talk. Your inner voice can help you interpret and even guide your dreams.

In another nightmare I was trapped inside a haunted mansion with a horde of snarling demons chasing me. In my dream, I ran down a long hallway and came to a big closed door. I managed to outrun the demons, afraid they would catch up any minute. My choices were to go back the way I came or open the mysterious door to the unknown. In this house, demons were around every corner. For all I knew, there might be more demons behind the dark, foreboding door. Naturally, I asked my inner voice for guidance, “Are there demons in this room?”



Much to my surprise, it said, “Yes. Many. But be fearless: you can defeat them all.”

Emboldened and confident in its guidance, I opened the door and stepped inside to face my demons. The room had six or seven snarling black demons that encircled me. The door slammed shut behind me and they closed in to attack, but I got really angry and started throwing punches. After a few minutes of intense fighting that looked like something out of a cheap Kung Fu movie, I defeated four of the demons and the rest fled the room afraid of me! Even in my nightmares my inner voice had become a source of wisdom.

Let's Play!
Daily Decisions
Ask your inner wisdom about daily decisions. See how it improves your life. Make an effort to remember your dreams, then ask your inner voice for the meaning behind different aspects of the dreams.

Musical Interlude #5

“Little Neutrino” by Klaatu

Klaatu was an obscure band from Canada whose identity was kept secret for years. The mystery surrounding the band led many to conclude it was a secret incarnation of The Beatles, but it wasn't.

I loved their first few albums. One of their early gems was a song called “Little Neutrino.” It's only eight minutes long, not as long as the other songs I've mentioned. (In quantum physics, a neutrino is a subatomic particle theorized to be so tiny that it could pass through the entire earth without hitting a single atom. They just slip right through the space between the nucleus and the electrons.)

Again, it's not meditation music in the traditional sense, but it's very “cosmic.”

Like the other songs I've mentioned, listen to it under headphones with your eyes closed and try to follow the musical threads with your attention.

Chapter 19

“I spit in the eye of Satan,

And I will spit in thine,

The devils that surround thee,

Liveth only in thine eye.”

--Motörhead, “Bad Religion”

Evil Influence?

“What's today's lesson?” I asked.

“In your OBEs, you've seen firsthand that you are a spirit with a physical body. Imagine the millions of people who have died and found themselves unexpectedly cast into the spirit world. Many spirits regret things they did in life. Others regret things they could have done when they were alive, but didn't. Unlike them, you have a body; you have a unique chance to do all those things in life they can't. Go do them! At the very least feel blessed that you still have the opportunity.”

At this point I had convinced myself I wasn’t hearing voices but merely talking to my subconscious, but now I wondered if I was still influenced by outside forces. After all, I reasoned, if these messages (both wisdom and

knowledge) can come to me without my initiating contact, there must be an outside influence. I had seen spirits in OBEs, so I knew they were real. And my inner voice was right: I was a spirit myself. Maybe I had gotten their attention and now they were following me around like Patrick Swayze in the movie Ghost. The problem is, consulting with spirits is forbidden by the Bible and I was still clinging to Catholic ideals.

Since I couldn't talk to anyone about it, I decided to pay attention to the messages and look for hints that might tell me whether it was good or evil.

Late one morning, I was walking across campus toward my next class when I saw a young man standing on the sidewalk, riffling through papers. My inner voice gave me images that translated into, “Go over and ask him if he needs help.”

I was concerned. Was this mysterious source of inner wisdom getting bossy? Then again, what harm could come out of helping this guy? I walked over and asked, “Do you need some help?”

Looking ruffled, he seemed annoyed at the distraction. He said, “I’m trying to find my campus map. I’m supposed to meet my friends at the Christian Center.”

I decided he was probably a freshman, unfamiliar with the campus. I was a freshman too, but I knew the campus very well. For the past few years, I couldn’t wait for my high school classes to let out so I could take a bus to the University and take free community education computer classes. By the

time I started attending the University in an official capacity, I knew every building and computer lab.

I pointed to a huge stone building and said, “The Christian Center is directly on the other side of this building. Those doors over there are usually locked, so you’ll have to walk around it.”

He thanked me and dashed off in the direction I pointed. I smiled as I watched him go.

Later that evening, I was in another computer lab working on a pet computer program. Looking up from my computer terminal, I noticed a man sitting nearby, staring at a computer printout with a scowl on his face. My inner voice suggested, “Why don’t you go help him?”

I walked over to him and offered to help.

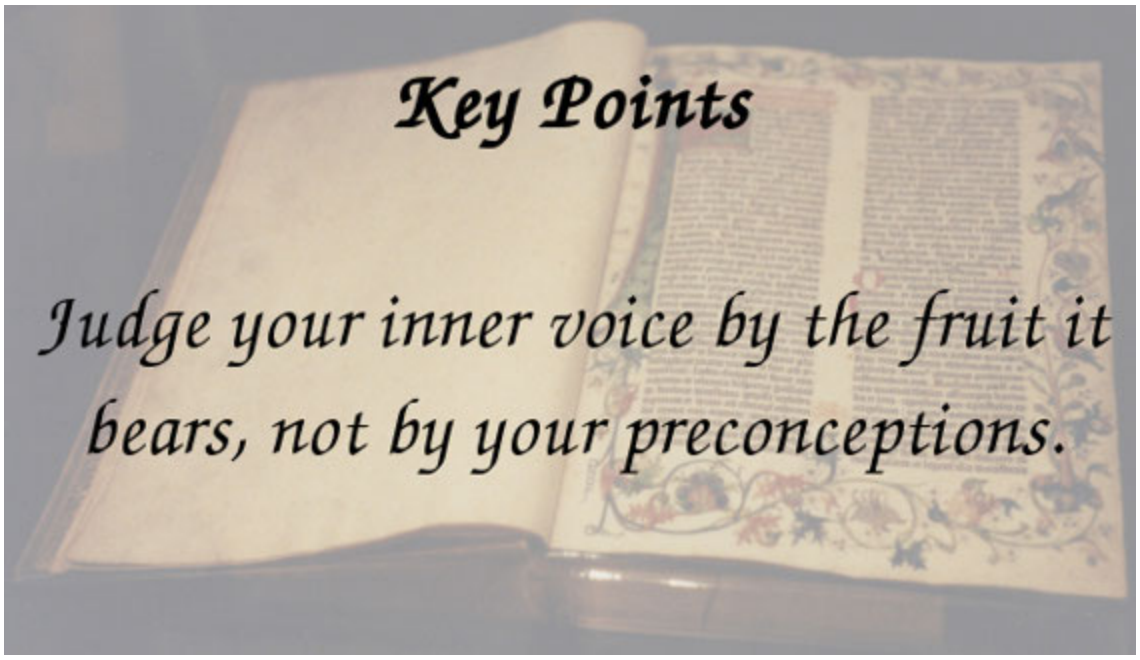
The man was years older than me, and he looked perplexed. He said, “I just don’t see what the computer doesn’t like about my program. I’ve been over it a hundred times, but it just won’t compile.”

I looked at the man's pile of paper and riffed through it. It was the Pascal language, one of many computer languages I knew, and my favorite at the time (this took place before the “C” computer language was around). I pointed at a page and said, “Here's your problem. You’re missing a semicolon right here. See?”

He looked at the paper with a puzzled look on his face. Then his face lit up and he smiled. “You’re right. That’s it. Thanks!”

I walked back to my computer terminal and smiled as I stuffed my things into my backpack and prepared to head home for the day.

As I walked toward my bus stop, I saw a self-appointed preacher evangelizing at the students as they passed by. He was known around campus as Brother Jed and a small crowd gathered around him, mostly to heckle. The man taunted the crowd, told them they were all hopeless sinners, on the “wide road to destruction, destined to burn in hell.” As I walked toward my bus stop, I thought about how ridiculous the man was; I never believed in the concept of original sin and after several OBEs I had serious doubts about hell too. I wondered what the man would say if he had been out of his body and seen the “other side” like I had. Defending the man, my inner voice suggested, “You should read the New Testament to find out what it really says, rather than just listening to what other people have to say about it and making rash judgments. Jesus said, ‘Judge not, lest ye yourself be judged.’”



On the bus ride home I remembered that morning's question about whether my inner voice was some kind of evil influence. I decided it didn't make sense that my inner voice was Satan whispering in my ear, and I now had four good reasons to back that up: First, my inner voice was not only helping me, it was also directing me to help others. Second, if there was a Satan, he probably wouldn't direct me to help someone find a Christian Center like the freshman. Third, Satan wouldn't suggest I read the Bible. Fourth, Satan certainly wouldn't be giving me lessons by quoting Jesus.

It may not be Satan, but there still seemed to be some source of information that transcended my normal consciousness. What was it? Was it an angel? A spirit guide?

Whatever my inner voice was, it was fond of helping people and certainly not evil or satanic.

Let's Play!
Spiritual Interpretation
When talking to your inner voice, affirm to yourself that the only messages you should receive are the most spiritual ones, for your highest good. If the voice you interpret is not spiritual, ignore it; it's not your inner voice.

Chapter 20

“If you want to arrange it, This world you can change it

If we could somehow make this Christmas thing last

By helping a neighbor, or even a stranger

And to know who needs help,

You need only just ask”

--Trans-Siberian Orchestra, “Old City Bar”

Helping Others

Early one morning I reluctantly dragged my butt out of bed and went into the kitchen. I had been up later than normal writing in my OBE journal so I was really tired. I didn't like the taste of coffee, but needed the caffeine to wake up, so I grabbed a can of Mountain Dew from the fridge. I turned on the television to watch the morning news and hopefully engage my brain.

As I took a sip of soda pop and waited for the television to start talking, my inner voice said, “Take the love in your heart and multiply it by a thousand.”

“Excuse me?” I asked groggily.

It repeated itself. “Take the love in your heart and multiply it by a thousand.”

I was so tired, I had no clue why I received this message. So I asked it, “Um, why am I supposed to do that?”

“That's your lesson of the day.”

I laughed at myself. I was so tired that I had completely forgotten to ask for a lesson, but my inner voice gave me one anyway!

It elaborated on the lesson. “Today, pretend that your whole body is filled with love to the point of overflowing. Pretend your body is too small and insignificant to hold the love inside, so it wants to burst from you like a gusher. It seeps from every pore and radiates like light from you. Your breath radiates love into the air around you. Your eyes radiate love and everything you look upon is touched by love, just like a priest giving holy Eucharist to the faithful. Even your urine fills the toilet bowl with love that eventually flows into the sewers, eventually filling the rivers with love. It guides your every action. You're radiant. There's so much of it that people can't help but notice.”

It sounded like a fun lesson for the day, much easier than some of my previous lessons, and I thought about it as the television started to babble.

It wasn't finished. “In fact, the situation I've described is much closer to the truth than you realize. We are all filled to the brim with God's love and radiate it to each other. The problem is, we've chosen to blind ourselves to it. We know less than one thousandth of it. It fills us so completely and is so pervasive that we take it for granted and don't even notice. Your job today is to finally notice. That was the secret to Jesus's healings.”

As I was preparing to leave for work. I opened the garage door, wheeled my motorcycle out of the garage and into the driveway. I pulled the garage door down, then went back to the bike and put my helmet on. I mounted the motorcycle and reached for my key, but something made me pause. My inner voice said, “Bring your bag of tools: It'll come in handy today; You'll regret it if you don't.”

Insecurity crept in and I hesitated. Should I risk taking the bike to work at all? Maybe a bus would be safer. I'd hate to be stranded somewhere in the middle of St. Paul with my motorcycle broken. The first message was from my inner voice. The second was from the voice of fear. I trusted the first.

I got off the motorcycle, unlocked the garage door and went back inside with my helmet still on. I grabbed my tool bag from the shelf and headed back outside.

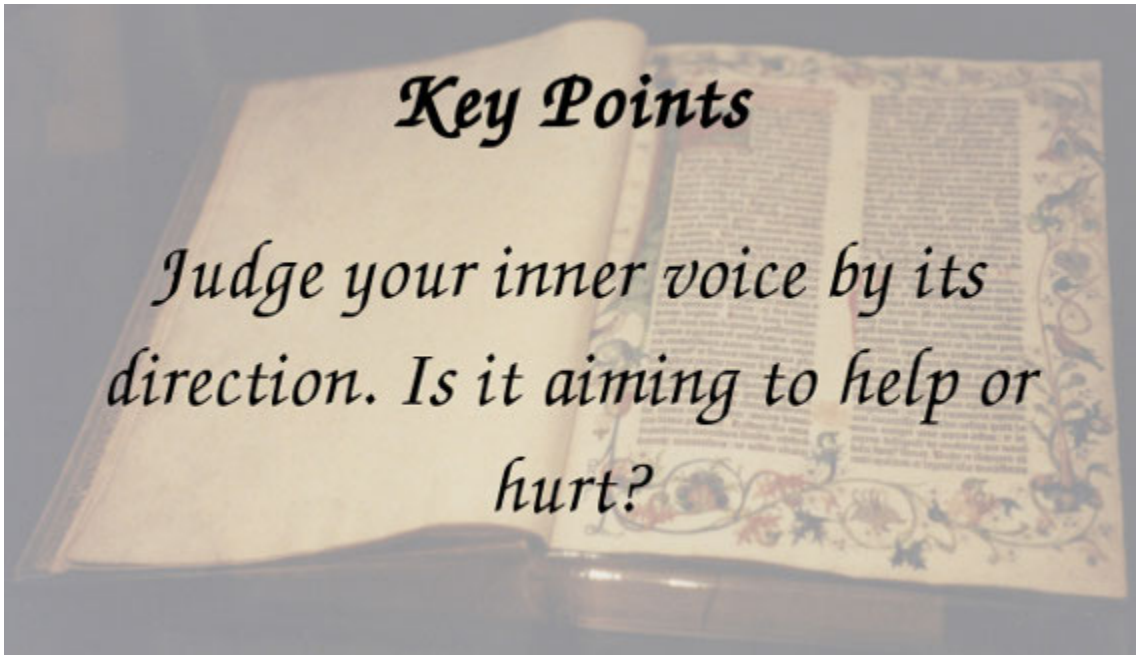
Still worried, I attached the tool bag to the motorcycle, then asked, “Is my motorcycle going to break down?” It replied, “Your motorcycle is fine.”

I put my hands on my hips. “Then why should I bring my tools?” It said, “Trust me. You'll regret it if you don't.”

I was relieved when I got to work with no problems. After work, I went to visit a friend who was having some health problems. Like many times in the past, my inner voice said, “Park over there.” As I pulled into the parking spot, I noticed a man with a stalled truck in the parking space next to mine. I got off the bike and took off my helmet, then I walked over to the man and asked him, “Having truck problems?”

He said, “Yeah. You haven't got a Phillips head screwdriver on you, do you?”

I got out the tool bag, fished around inside and pulled out a screwdriver. I handed it to the man and he thanked me. As I walked away I asked my inner voice, “Can I trust him or will he steal it?”



“You can trust him.”

Later, when I came back to the motorcycle, the truck was gone and my screwdriver was on the seat. I saw it and smiled. I was glad I had brought the tools, and I thanked my inner voice. It had been right: The man was trustworthy and I would have regretted it if I had not brought the tool bag.

Another day I was driving near the University, early for a class. Needing to kill time, I decided to visit my credit union which was in a neighborhood called Dinkytown. Like before, my inner voice suggested I “park over there.”

I pulled into the spot, parked the motorcycle and walked to my credit union office just down the block. When I got to the credit union, I found the door locked. I looked at my watch and discovered why: I had arrived ten minutes before they opened.

I was irked. Just why in the hell, I wondered, did my inner voice suggest a parking spot? It could have just as easily told me the credit union was closed and I could have done something else. Still, I held my “inner tongue.” There's always a reason.

I walked back down the street, wondering what I should do to kill the time. My inner voice cheerfully suggested “Why don't you go into McDonald's?” which was in the opposite direction. So I did an about-face, walked to McDonald's and went inside.

I decided to order something small for breakfast and got in line. The man in front of me ordered some coffee, but his speech was very slurred because he was deaf. The man repeated his order several times, but the cashier just didn't understand. I knew a tiny bit of American Sign Language, so I acted as translator to allow him to speak with his cashier, and he was grateful.

I knew why my inner voice had guided me to that place: to help where help was needed.

After I left, my inner voice congratulated me for a job well done. I felt good inside. I was glad that my inner voice was pointing me at opportunities like this; nothing gave me more satisfaction than helping people.

I was starting to feel pretty good about this inner voice thing. Then something else shook my faith: one of my favorite bands, Kansas, kind of went off the deep end. At least, that's how I saw it. Normally, their songs seemed to talk directly to me; they often seemed to accurately reflect where my life was going. Suddenly their main song writer, Kerry Livgren, decided to become a fundamentalist Christian. Their 1982 album “Vinyl Confessions” had a song called “Play The Game Tonight” and it was pretty negative. The refrain goes:

Play, play the game tonight.

Can you tell me if it's wrong or right?

Is it worth the time? Is it worth the price?

Do you see yourself in the wide spotlight?

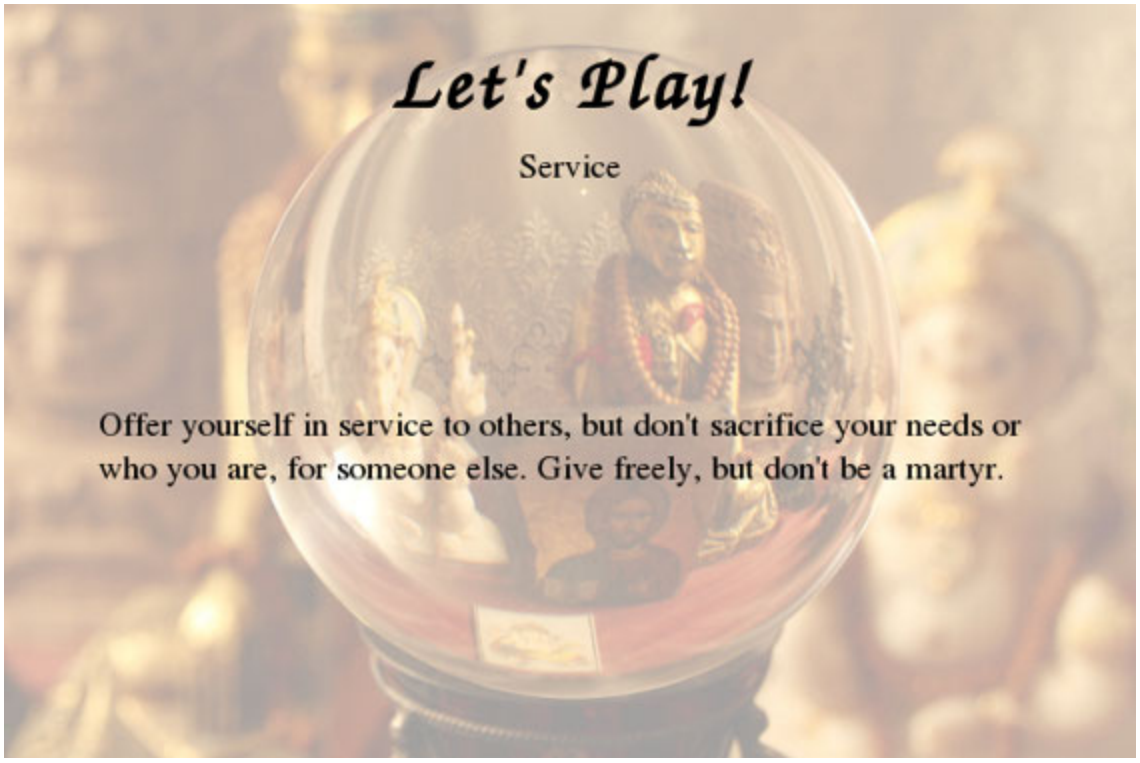
I was so used to looking for messages and metaphors around me that I wondered if their lyrics pertained to my wisdom game. Like before, I started to worry if my inner voice really was a good thing, and whether I was influenced by spirits.

I confronted my fears head-on. About a month after the album's release, my friend Lisa talked me into going to a Spiritualist church service. The service was presided by an unkempt woman dressed in a shabby black dress. Her name was Birdie and it was apparent that her focus was more on the spirit world than this one. She was an amazing psychic. Before the service, Lisa had warned me, “Be careful with your thoughts. Don't think anything bad, because she can hear them.”

Part of the service included readings from psychics who told me many things, all of which were very accurate. The readers described two spirits around me. The first spirit perfectly fit my father (who had recently passed away) and his message was that I should write more! The reader named the second spirit “Mary” and her description matched my grandmother whose name was “Marie.” (I didn't know it at the time, but my mother also had a baby named Mary who died before I was born.) I was impressed. Maybe these spirits weren't so bad after all!

Now I was torn. Spiritualism was an entire religion founded on spirit communication, but as I said in chapter 12, the Bible's Old Testament forbids it. I wanted to ask Birdie about it, but she was surrounded by people and very busy. Plus, thanks to Lisa, I was a little bit afraid of her.

This inner conflict, plus Kerry Livgren's conversion to fundamentalist Christianity, renewed my interest in my religion. I wanted to know exactly what the Bible said about things like spirits and inner voices.


Let's Play!
Service
Offer yourself in service to others, but don't sacrifice your needs or who you are, for someone else. Give freely, but don't be a martyr.

Psychic Sensitivity Exercise #5

Temple Energy Exercise

This exercise is similar to the third-eye exercise, but you're focusing on both temples, the area in front of your ears, simultaneously.

This exercise can be done with your eyes open or closed. I keep my eyes open.

Use both of your index fingers to point at your temples. Start your fingers about two inches (five centimeters) from your temples.

Try to feel a stream of energy extending from both temples, reaching out to touch each finger.

Slowly move your fingers further away from your temples and see if you can feel the energy extend outward like tubes from your head. Then move them back in again.

Next, imagine both tubes of energy being gently squeezed a tiny bit.

Play with this energy the same way you did the third eye energy.

Take your fingers away and see if you can still feel the energy extending from your temples.

Chapter 21

“I traveled to a distant shore, I felt I had to go,

An inner voice had called me there,

but why I did not know...

I'm home once more, much better for

the things that I have found,

Much wiser now, so simple how

each time I turn around”

--Judas Priest, “Evening Star”

Sacred Texts

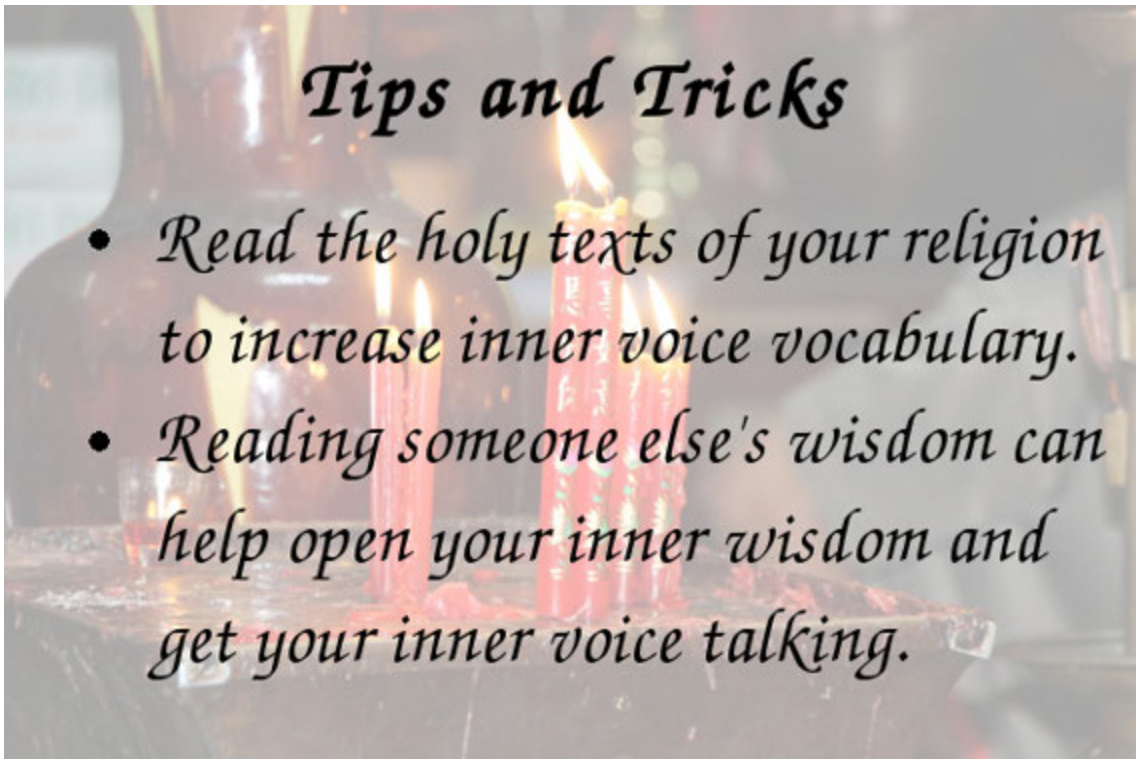
“What's today's lesson?” I asked.

“Today, pretend you are Jesus inside, or maybe the reincarnation of Buddha, Lao Tzu, Mohammed, Krishna or Zoroaster. I don't mean for you to go preaching. In fact, don't let anyone know at all. Just pretend that everyone you touch today will be healed, as Christ healed the sick and restored sight to the blind. Just try to feel the inner holiness, the connection to God, the humility, compassion, and divine providence.”

I had heard the word “providence” before, but didn't know it well enough to use it in a sentence so I looked it up: “The guardianship and control exercised by a deity.”

At first the thought of pretending I was Christ struck me as kind of arrogant. How egotistical, how presumptuous. Look at me, I'm God incarnate! Bah.

My inner voice stepped in and corrected my thinking. “You might think of Jesus as superior to ordinary people like yourself, but I didn't tell you to pretend you were superior. In fact, the humble meekness of Jesus is part of what made him great. The same goes for the Dalai Lama, Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Yogananda, Buddha and all the saints and holy men and women. What sets the prophets apart is that they knowthey are merely instruments of God's will, and that their egos are unimportant.”


Tips and Tricks
Read the holy texts of your religion to increase inner voice vocabulary.
Reading someone else's wisdom can help open your inner wisdom and get your inner voice talking.

It went on to explain my assignment. “Pretend you were sent to this world by God. Don't do God's will, be God's will. That's what Jesus meant when he said ‘Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.’ Pretend you came to this world with a mission. Pretend you have a halo over your head. When you see someone, in your mind only, bless them and think to yourself, “Peace be with you.” Pretend you are a holy man with a special message for this Earth. Everyone is all of those things.”

I had heard priests give sermons about how we should be more Christ-like. This clearly took the concept a step further. This wasn't just trying to be like Christ, this was trying to feel what it was to be Christ inside, to claim that holiness, love and humility as an integral part of my being.

My out-of-body experiences and Kerry Livgren's conversion to Christianity made me question the religion I was raised in, Catholicism. Under the advice of my inner voice, I decided to read the entire New Testament of the

Bible and see what I could learn. I wanted to read what is there firsthand, get it from the source, and not settle for interpretations of others.

What I found surprised me. I spent months studying the Bible and it was nothing like I had been led to believe.

Now, it's not my place to tell you what to believe. That's beyond the scope of this book; you have to figure that out yourself. Suffice it to say that reading the Bible gave my inner voice more vocabulary than any song ever did. As I read the verses, I occasionally paused and asked my inner voice questions about Christianity. It clarified a lot of things and led to many other philosophical discussions.

For example, one day I was reading the end of the first book of Corinthians: “And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” I remembered that some Bibles listed the last item, translated from the Greek word Agape, as love rather than charity.

I thought about the first item, faith, and I remembered another Bible verse where Jesus said that faith can move mountains. Immediately my inner voice stepped in, sent me a smile and said, “You already know what can move mountains.” The implication was that it was not faith or hope, but love.

This concept of reading holy texts and getting a running commentary from my inner voice gave a whole new meaning to “reading between the lines.” I had my own private Catechism or Bible school, as I read. But it didn't stop there.

After I had finished reading and reflecting on the Bible, I began to miss the philosophical discussions and religious insight, so I started reading the sacred texts of other religions. I had taken some Tai Chi Chuan classes from a guy who sometimes gave us Taoist philosophy, so I decided to read the Taoist holy book, the Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu.

When I was through with that, I read the yoga aphorisms of Patanjali, the spiritual texts of the Yogis, and then several books on Buddhism and Zen Buddhism. Then I studied the Hindu Bible, the Bhagavad Gita. I got a running commentary on everything I read.

What surprised me is how similar the major religions are. Many tout morals and lay out laws and guidelines for living a pure life, and those vary from religion to religion. Many state what is important in life, and that varies from religion to religion as well. In the Bible, it even varies from book to book. But what they all have in common is that their founders had a connection to the divine through meditation.

So what religion do I follow now? All of them. None of them. I eventually left the Catholic religion and decided to walk my own path.

I define a person's religion as their own personal, private relationship with God, and that's totally different from religious organizations and their practices. Religious and spiritual dogma and rituals remind us what's important and occasionally pull us away from the distractions of the physical world and materialism, but they should not be confused for a relationship with God. Book knowledge will never replace direct experience. Ritual will never replace true devotion. And someone else's

wisdom will never be as good or applicable to your life as your own wisdom from within.

And what did all these holy books teach about spirits? To my disappointment, not much.

Let's Play!
Sacred Texts
Open the Bible or other holy book to a random passage and begin reading. Ask your inner voice to elaborate on what you read. Ask how it applies to you and your life.

Chapter 22

“Rays of power shining, Rays of magic fall,

On the golden voice, that speaks within us all,

For all of us waiting, Your kingdom will come”

--Manowar, “Kingdom Come”

Inner Arguments

“What's today's lesson?” I asked.

“Life is a masquerade ball. We wear masks to hide the 'real' person inside. When someone greets you and asks you how you are, your mask smiles back and says 'Fine, how are you,' even if the truth is far from that. We don't show pain because we don't want to be vulnerable. We don't show the heights of joy because we don't want people to think we're foolish. You don't show them the real you because you're afraid that will give them power over you. In fact, if you show them the real you, they're more likely to lower their own masks. What you may discover, given enough time, is that it is God looking back at you, through their eyes.”

“Today, and from this day on, discard all masks. You don't need them anymore; they stifle the real you. When you talk to someone, show them the

real you. Let the true, deep, real you shine through always. When you look at someone, look deep into their eyes to see their real self.”

At first, I wasn't sure I could show people the real me. I wasn’t sure if I wantedto do it. I argued back. “I'm not sure that's a good idea. Our masks are there to protect us.”

“A suit of armor protects you too, but it also restricts your ability to move freely. With every protection there is a price. A wall may keep harmful things from getting in, but it also keeps you from getting out. And right now, it's better to lose the limitations. That's the lesson of Pink Floyd.”

I felt uncomfortable about this, but deep down I knew it was right. I thought about arguing some more, but decided against it. Lately, my arguments with my inner voice were getting more frequent and more heated, and I decided I had had enough.

I had good reasons to argue with it. The first reason is going to sound strange: My inner voice seems more liberal and I'm more conservative. Maybe it was all the time I spent playing devil's advocate with myself. Sometimes it even seemed like “it” started the argument. For example, I'd see a beggar and think they were lazy, but my inner voice would step in and defend them, often quoting Jesus, “Judge not...”

The second reason I argued was that I was concerned about spirits. If my inner voice was influenced by spirits, how far could I trust it? Spirits are dead people, not to be trusted any more than the living. Most may be

benign, but not all. At least with a living person, you can read their faces. That's hard to do with a spirit unless you can actually see them.

Determined to find out whether I was dealing with a spirit, I came up with a plan. During OBEs I perceived three kinds of spirits: living people, ordinary spirits, and guides. If my inner voice was a spirit, I figured I might be able to tell which kind it was during an OBE.

There was no way my inner voice was from the spirit of a living person. In my OBEs, I had tried many times to talk to people who were in the body, but compared to ordinary spirits they seemed distracted, even dim-witted. It was like talking to the person’s subconscious as they went about their day.

Ordinary spirits weren't very interesting and often didn't even seem to notice me. When they did, they acted like ordinary people you'd meet on the street and engaged in small-talk. Not trusting spirits, I tried not to interact with them much.

Then there were spirit guides. What set them apart was the fact that they were invisible. During OBEs I could hear their disembodied voices but they were invisible because their vibrations were so much higher than mine.

My plan was simple: I'd induce an OBE, but instead of exploring the non-physical state, I'd engage my inner voice and see if it fell into any of these categories, and that would ease my fears.

So one Saturday morning I induced an OBE, then used my protocol question to engage my inner voice. Interestingly, it was exactly the same as in waking life. In other words, I didn't see any spirits or hear any spirit voices. I got the same barrage of images and feelings and did the same translation into English. It didn't fit into any of my three categories of spirits. That made me feel better, at least for a while. Then the doubts started creeping in again and I started arguing.

One day I decided to be honest and confront my inner voice with my concerns. After I left work, I went for a short walk and asked my inner voice some new questions.

First, I decided that if I was communicating with a spirit, it would have a name, just like Seth, Michael, Ramtha or Lazaris. So my first question was "What is your name?"

"You can call me anything you like."

I would have been horrified if it had said, "Charlie" or worse, "Doctor Phineas." But the answer wasn't good enough. I felt like my question had been dodged by a clever politician who was put on the ropes by a reporter. I crafted a more precise question: "Do you have a name?"

"Names are not important; wisdom is important. Remember, the message is important, not the source."

Again, it seemed my answered had been dodged. Still, it seemed wise. I decided my line of questioning was still not direct enough. So I asked “Are you a spirit?”

“Everything on Earth is Spirit, the Spirit of God. But the answer to what you're really asking is no, not as you think of the term.”

Ah, now I was getting somewhere. “Then what are you?”

“Someone who has your best interests at heart: I am you; another part of you.”

That was an interesting answer but it wasn't very comforting. I seemed to recall that when someone asked “Seth,” the entity channeled by Jane Roberts, “he” said a very similar thing. He said he was a part of Jane Roberts' psyche, and therefore nobody else could channel him after she died.

That brought another question to mind: If my inner voice was another part of me, was it the first signs of schizophrenia? Some say there is a thin line between religious clarity and insanity. But that was a different topic for a different day. I asked, “Why are you here? Why am I hearing you?”

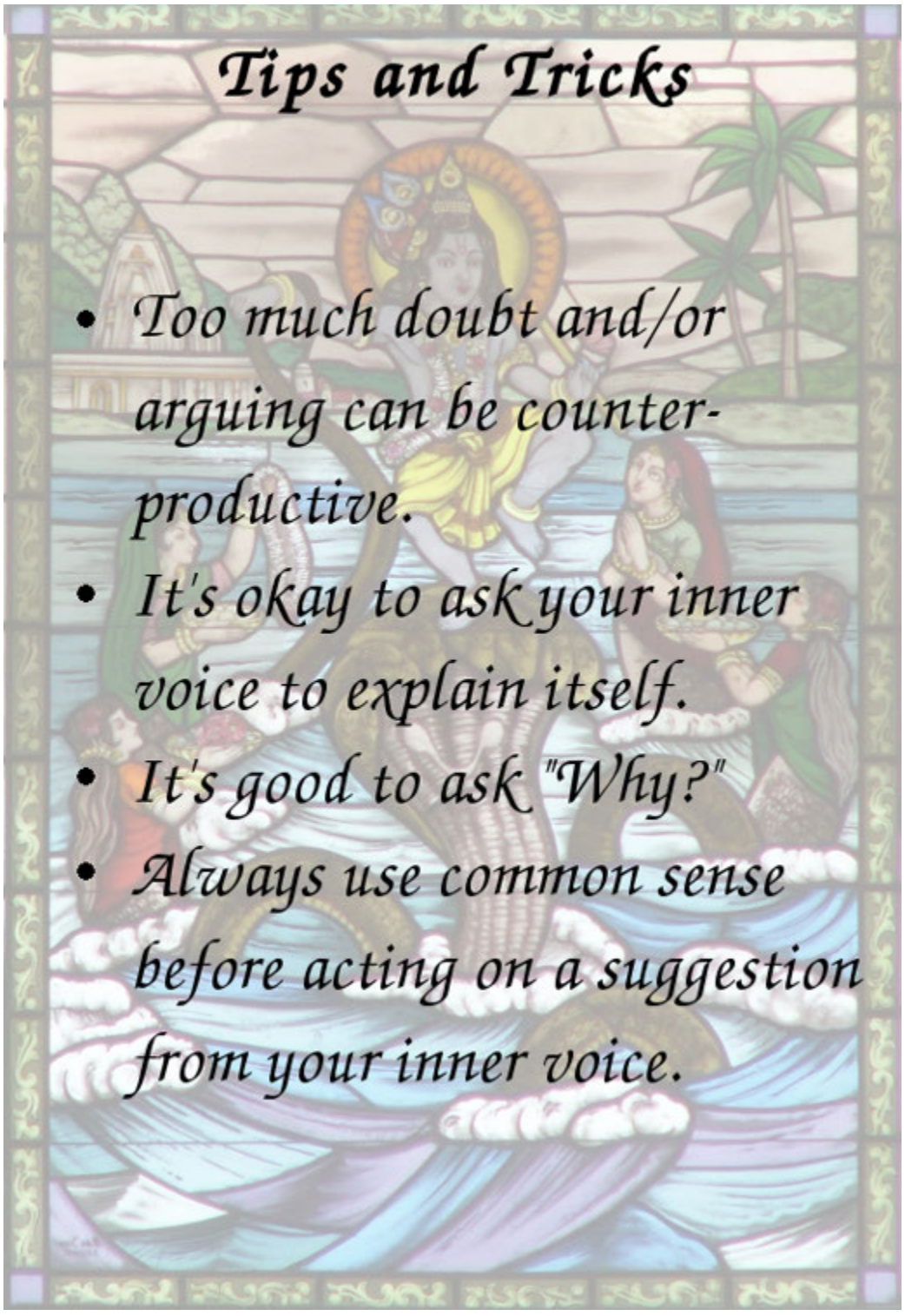
“My job is to help you in any way that I can, to help you become more aware, to see that you pay attention to the lessons that you are learning.”

Then something odd occurred to me. If my inner voice was just another part of me—my subconscious—why did it phrase sentences in the second person rather than the first? Why did it say things like “You should help this guy” rather than “I should help this guy.” I asked, “If you're me, than why do you address me as you?”

My inner voice sent me a short chuckle. “That's to help you tell the difference between your own thoughts and my messages.”

Despite its deep wisdom and seemingly sound advice, I still had nagging doubts. Sometimes I would take its advice and sometimes I wouldn't. Time after time, my inner voice proved its guidance was sound, but still I would not trust it. And because I was afraid of what people would think, I never told anyone.

On one particular evening, I rode my bicycle home from work. I was dripping wet from rain as I got off and rolled it into our storage shed. My inner voice had suggested that morning that I take the bus, but I ignored it and rode my bike anyway. The result was a long and annoying ride home through the rain. My clothes were soaked and I shivered from the cold. I grumbled to myself as I walked toward the house. Amused, my inner voice initiated a dialog. “Why do you constantly fight me?”

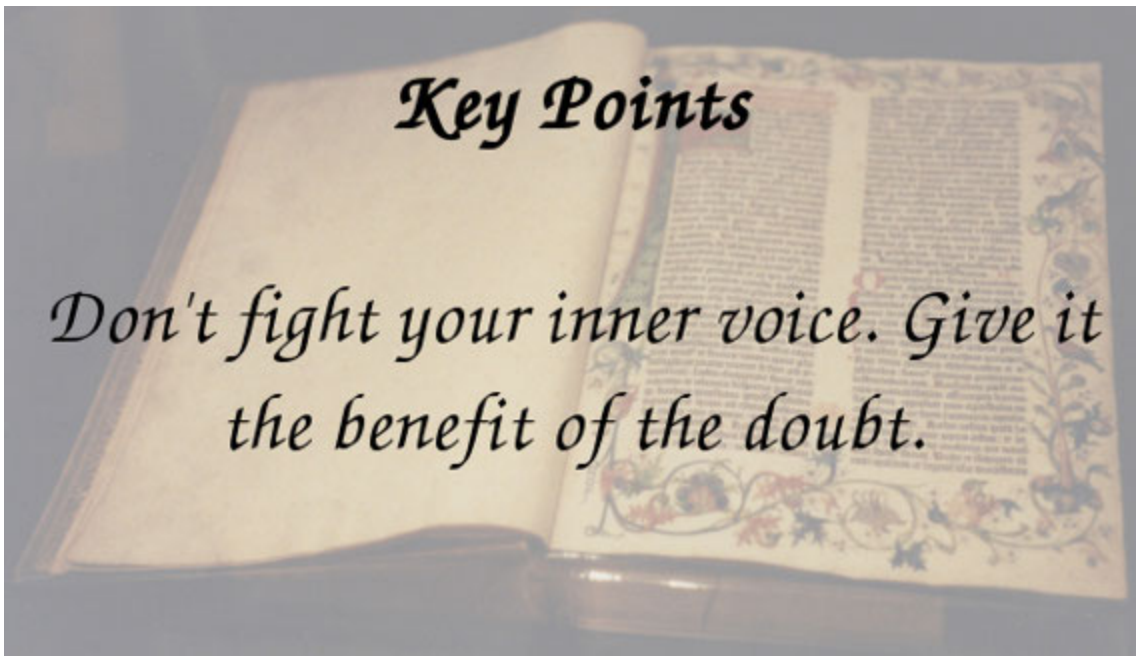

Tips and Tricks
• Too much doubt and/or arguing can be counter-productive.
• It's okay to ask your inner voice to explain itself.
• It's good to ask "Why?"
• Always use common sense before acting on a suggestion from your inner voice.

Annoyed, I replied, “I just don't trust you; I've heard of stories where some psycho murders someone and later say that ‘God’ or ‘Voices’ told them to kill. If you ask me, any kind of nonverbal communication seems really

strange; if anyone knew I talked to a voice inside, they would lock me up and throw away the key."

My inner voice replied, "Have I ever told you to kill people? No. Have I ever told you a lie? No. Have I ever given you a reason to mistrust me? No. Has anything I've said ever been wrong? No."

"Always remember: It's okay to listen to your inner voice, and it's okay to take its advice, but always use your own judgment. Don't use me as an excuse to do something (or not) or for not using your own judgment. As long as you use common sense, you aren't going to kill people, because common sense tells you that murder is wrong."



"I am here to give you advice and helpful hints. I can answer any questions, provided those questions are not part of your current life-lessons. For some lessons, you must find the answers for yourself."

“What I am asking is very simple. Try an experiment: try trusting me and taking my advice (while still using your own judgment and common sense) for one week, without fighting me. After one week, if I've lied to you or misguided you, feel free to ignore me. However, if my advice has been good, you can take this as far as you want.”

I agreed to the experiment. I started blatantly ignoring weather forecasts and traffic reports and just followed my inner voice’s advice. One week passed and my psychic awareness increased. My life ran a whole lot smoother. I decided I would continue to trust my inner voice until it gave me reasons to distrust it.

Or maybe it's more accurate to say I decided to stop fighting it constantly. I decided to give it the benefit of the doubt: It was innocent until proven guilty. I'd follow its advice, through the critical eye of common sense, at least until it misled me or gave me a reason to distrust. I still reserved the right to argue with it on occasion though.

Months later I had a strange experience that clearly showed me the difference between my inner voice and actual spirit communication. It was so remarkable and different from my other experiences that I wrote about it in my OBE journal:

One day I was at the university campus, walking to one of my classes, and I was thinking about an article I read in The Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology that said the term “inner voice” refers to clairaudience. Suddenly I spiritually heard a female voice. The voice said, “My name is Julia, and I say it's not important where the wisdom comes from, but rather,

it's the wisdom itself that counts!" That was the first time I ever heard a voice that claimed to have a name! Also, that voice didn't need translation like my inner voice does. Instead, the words came through directly. Naturally, it shocked me quite a lot.

I remember darting my head left and right to see if the voice could have come from anyone nearby, but nobody was there.

I was surprised to hear what seemed to be an actual spirit voice, but by then I had had so many strange experiences that I was getting used to things like this. In my OBEs I had seen so many spirits that I was getting used to them too.

Frankly, it was a relief; it gave me a concrete experience with a spirit voice to compare to my inner voice. What I found was that they were completely different. My paranoia about spirits was resolved like a black cloud over my head had been lifted. Plus, I agreed with Julia!

Let's Play!
Trusting Your Subconscious
Stop wrestling for control. For one week, follow the directions of your inner voice, not blindly but filtered by your common sense. Approach its advice with trust rather than distrust.

Musical Interlude #6

“Cygnus X-1” by Rush

Again, this is a rock and roll song, not a meditation song. But the creative way it switches between your ears can increase your psychic sensitivity.

Cygnus X-1 is the name of a black hole, and this song is about a guy who is trying to find out what it is. He gets in his space ship and flies toward it, eventually getting sucked into it by its over-whelming gravity.

As you listen to the song, keep your eyes closed and try to imagine yourself flying at high speed toward a black hole.

Like some of the previous exercises, this one helps to extend your awareness away from the confines of your body.

Chapter 23

“Then, as it was, then again it will be

And though the course may change sometimes

Rivers always reach the Sea”

--Led Zeppelin, “Ten Years Gone”

The River of Life

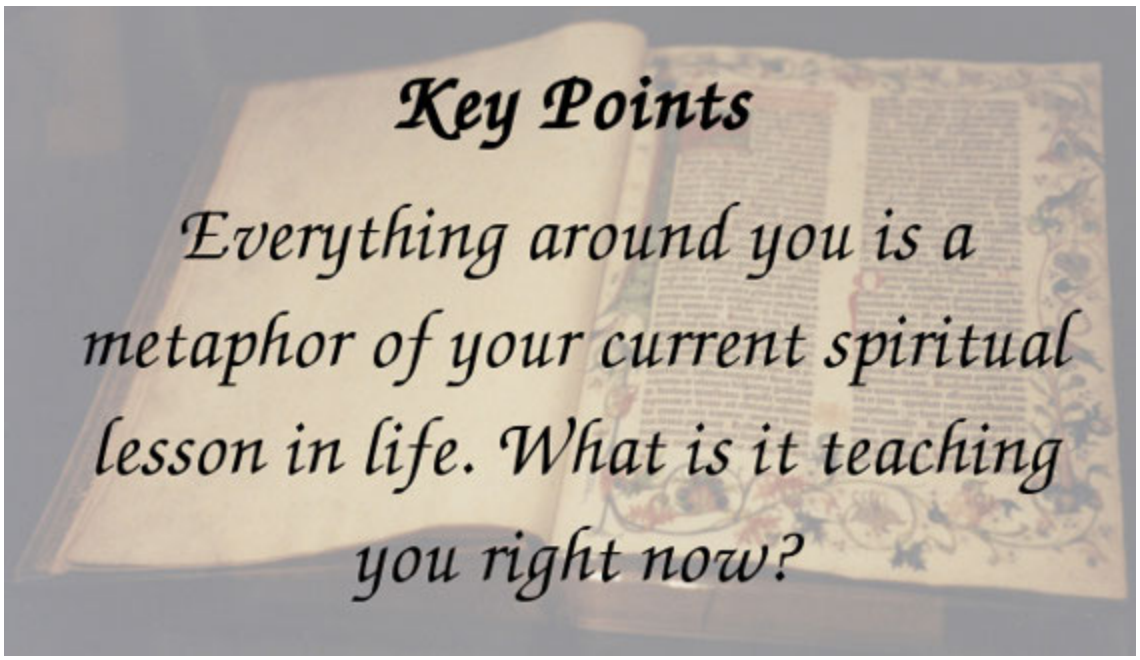
As time went on, my life became an ongoing dialog with my inner voice. Almost everything I saw and did was accompanied by a running commentary. I was playing the wisdom game more than I wasn't playing. Perhaps it's more accurate to say that it became automatic: I lived my life within the game. It was like having my best friend at my side wherever I went.

In chapter 3 I described how I had walked through a forest and “made up” metaphors from everything I saw. It felt like I was reaching into the depths of my soul's silence to retrieve wisdom from my inner voice. Now my inner voice was such an integral part of me that it seemed like the converse was taking place: it was reaching up to me from the silence and sending me the metaphors.

Almost every object I saw was used to illustrate spiritual points. If I walked through a flower garden, my inner voice would explain how our lives were like gardens and our lessons like flowers: beautiful in their own unique way, grown, cultivated, nurtured and hand-picked, and sometimes accompanied by thorns.

I felt like everything that surrounded me in this world was a prop on the stage of my life: unimportant, except as a symbol or metaphor of the lessons I needed to learn.

I also found my inner voice interpreting everything around me as a message relating to a life-lesson. If I took out the trash, my inner voice would say, “Remove the trash from your soul.” If it was windy, my inner voice would send me a snippet of a Led Zeppelin song, “Though the winds of change may blow around you, but that will always be so.” When I ate, it would say, “The food fuels your body, but God's love fuels your soul.”


Key Points
Everything around you is a metaphor of your current spiritual lesson in life. What is it teaching you right now?

One day I took another walk down by the Mississippi. I asked my inner voice the now familiar protocol question, “What is love?” I still did that sometimes to strengthen the connection.

In this case, the symbol was the river itself. “Love is the river that carries us on our path.”

I remembered a song by Dan Fogelberg called “The River.” The song ends with the lyrics: “My life was naught but a river, Rolling through my brain, Made of so many teardrops, Made of so much pain.” I didn't like the part about pain, but I liked the analogy about our lives being like rivers. My inner voice then dictated a long discourse on rivers.

“Our lives are like rivers in many ways. Our higher self plots the course of the river. The rocks are the obstacles we must overcome. The islands are the milestones along the way.”

“The river of our life takes us from the wellspring of existence, past waterfalls, bends, rapids and whirlpools. It intersects with other lives, as one river flows into another. What people call 'destiny' is the course and features of the river that are charted and planned by our higher self. And 'free will' is our ability to navigate to different areas of the river.”

“As a river has varying depths, so the lessons of our life have varying depth.”

“Sometimes you need to dredge the river, to bring up muck and debris from the bottom in order to allow for more depth. It's not an easy nor a pleasant task but it has a purpose.”

“Sometimes the river runs fast and some-times slow, just as our lives run fast or slow. Some-times you try to 'push the river,' to try to make it go faster, but that is foolish: it moves at its own pace.”

“Sometimes there are waves and the ride is bumpy, and other times it is smooth. Sometimes the water is muddy and sometimes clear. The waves on the surface look chaotic but below the surface there is a peaceful calm.”

“Sometimes you get splashed with water and get all flustered, but water dries: it is meaningless except for what it can teach you.”

“Some people spend their lives panning their river for gold, sifting through tons of dirt to find a few tiny nuggets. But the value is not in the gold but in the journey itself.”

“Some spend their whole lives searching for meaning, love, or God, trying to fill the hole of loneliness. But the meaning, love, and God they search for pervade everything. They are like fish searching for the water that surrounds them.”

“And when our lives are over, the river of life always dumps us into the Ocean of God.”

A couple years earlier I had probed the depths of the silence and stretched to find spiritual metaphors. Now, they were all I could see.

Let's Play!
Surrounded by Metaphors
Look at the things in your life to see if they have spiritual significance. A tree may signify your maturity or strength. A plant may signify flexibility or a willingness to grow. Ask yourself what direction you want to go spiritually and how to get there. What changes do you want to make in your life? Then change the things around you to reflect those changes. I'm not talking about big things, but just surrounding yourself with books to become spiritually educated, creating a small altar to become more spiritual, or eliminating clutter from your house to become less scattered.

Chapter 24

“Stop that reason, get the answer,

You've got to stop that thinking out loud

Go where your heart tells you to.”

--Yes, “Holding On”

“I Can't Tell You That”

On August 19, 1982, I was nearing the end of a week-long canoe trip down the North Fork Crow river with my brother Joe and his wife. In the early morning, I had an OBE in which I found myself with a woman whom I absolutely knew was my soulmate. You can read that story on my website (http://www.robertpeterson.org/) or in my second book, Lessons Out of the Body, but I won't go into the details here because it's beyond the scope of this book. What’s important is that it was a turning point in my life.

My inner voice had always been touting the importance of love, but I had never actually been in a serious, romantic relationship. After that OBE, I became aware of a gaping hole in my life that could only be filled by love. After I returned to my body, I stared up to the early morning sky through the window of my tent. Tears ran down my cheeks. I calmly asked my inner voice, “Where is she?”

“I can't tell you that.”

That was the one answer I had never expected. Up to that point, I had found very few questions my inner voice would not answer. “Oh yeah? Why the hell not?”

“It would interfere with your life-lesson.”

Just when I felt I needed its help the most, I was left on my own. I was crushed. It was a cruel trick. “What the hell are you talking about? This is important!”

“Everybody makes life plans, even before they're born. You set goals for who you wanted to be, what spiritual lessons you wanted to learn, what you wanted to accomplish, who you wanted to interact with; how to grow closer to God. All throughout your life, you make plans and see that they're carried out. Telling you her location at this point would irreparably damage those plans.”

“So what other restrictions are there? What can you tell me?”

“I can answer pretty much anything, unless it interferes with a life-lesson. I'm here to help you along your spiritual path. I'm here to help you read between the lines.”

The memory of my unknown soulmate's face shone brightly in my mind behind my closed eyelids for the next several days, but my once confident and strong heart was now tortured by her absence. From that day on, my life became a quest to find my soulmate at all costs.

Later that day, as I paddled the canoe silently down the river I asked, “Is she in Minnesota?”

“I can't tell you that.”

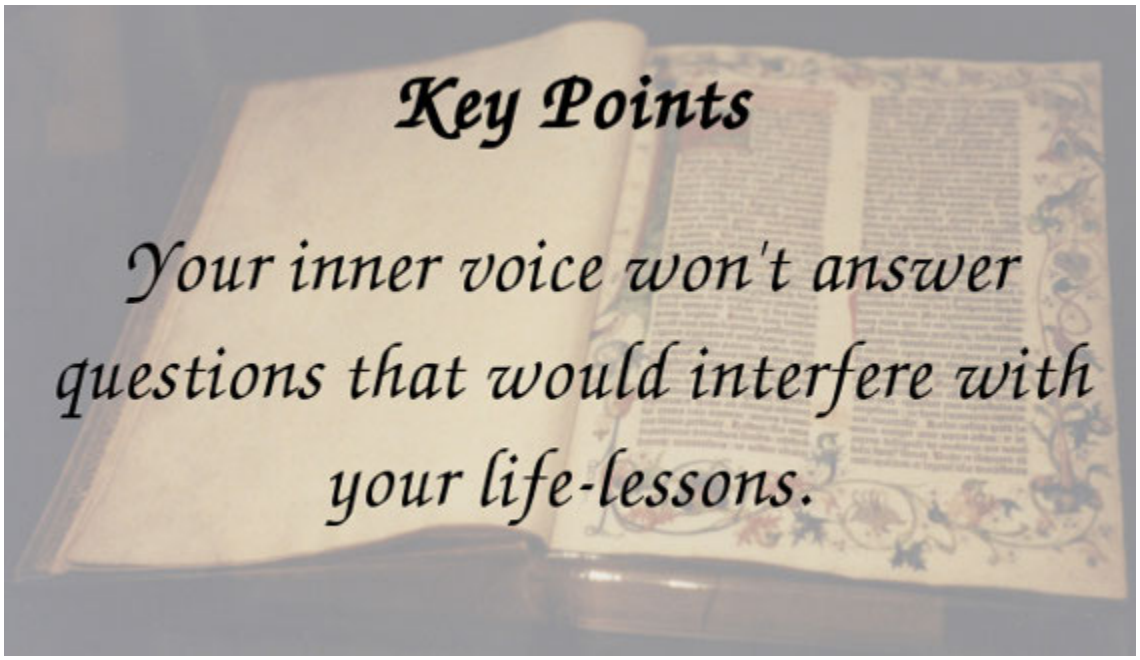
My brother Don had recently asked me to visit him in Arizona, to write some computer applications. I was tempted to go. “Is she in Arizona?”

“I can't tell you that.”

I asked my inner voice dozens of questions about my soulmate, but I got the same answer every time: “I can't tell you that.”

I kept pressing, pushing harder, digging deeper. “Why can't you tell me?”

“For life-lessons, you have to actually go through the experiences. You have to figure things out by yourself to learn the lesson. You have to do the homework.”



“That's pretty damn annoying, you know?”

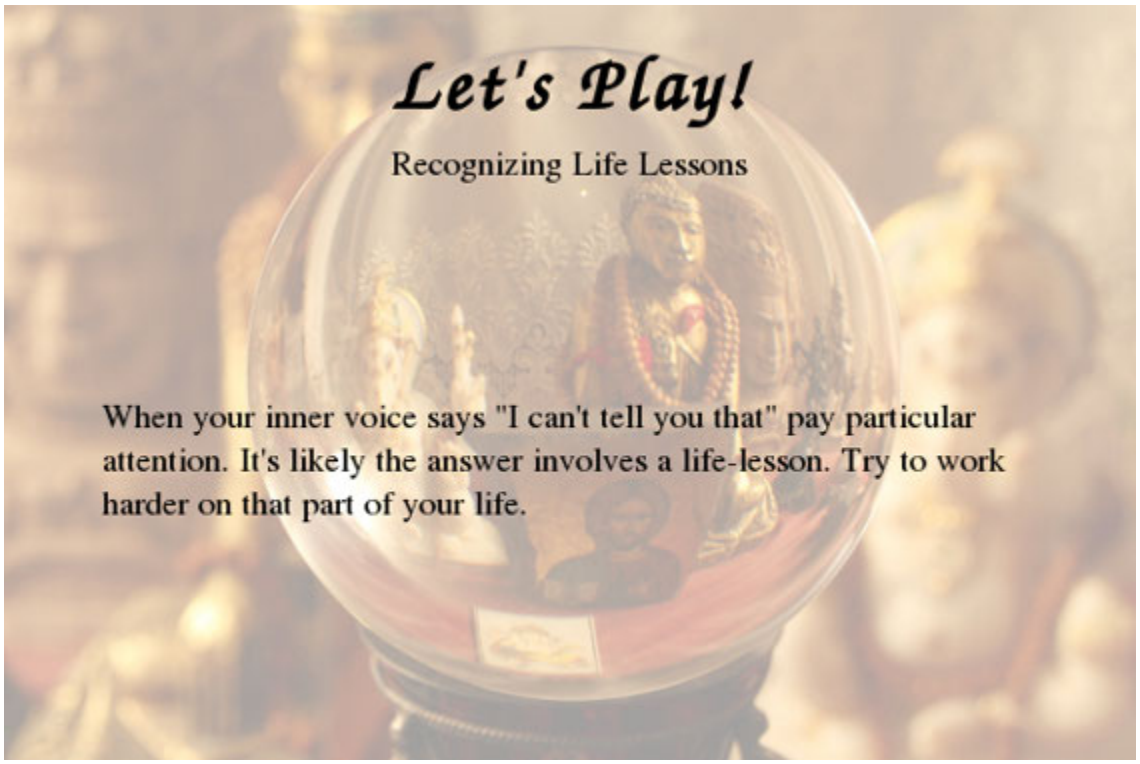
“Yes, I know.”

For a long time, whenever I saw a woman who reminded me of my soulmate, I'd ask my inner voice, “Is she my soulmate?” and as always, it would reply, “I can't tell you that because it would interfere with your life-lesson.”

In 1983 my favorite band, Yes, released the album 90125 with their famous song, “Owner of a Lonely Heart.” That was me. I had spent the year since my soulmate experience searching and I still had not found her. It was tearing me up inside.

The lyrics of Yes and singer, Jon Anderson, were often prophetic and mirrored my life, as Kansas once had. By then I always paid attention to songs that stuck in my head; whenever I bought music, I looked for messages inside that applied to my life. It wasn't that I saw messages that weren't there. It was more like I listened to the songs and read the lyrics, and while I did, my inner voice mentally “highlighted” the passages that applied to my life.

One of the songs on 90125, “Hearts,” had the following cryptic lyrics: “As the game extends the cycle, be ready to move.” It stuck in my head, but it didn't seem to apply to my life. But it did.


Let's Play!
Recognizing Life Lessons
When your inner voice says "I can't tell you that" pay particular attention. It's likely the answer involves a life-lesson. Try to work harder on that part of your life.

Psychic Sensitivity Exercise #6

Fireworks Exercise

Some teachers would say that this exercise is too risky or dangerous because it could accidentally ignite kundalini energy, which some yogis claim is a powerful and potentially harmful metaphysical energy coiled at the base of the spine. So I caution you to be careful with this one and consult a spiritual master if you have any questions or problems. On the positive side, I've done this exercise countless times for many years and never had a problem.

The exercise is basically this: Sit and get comfortable with your back straight, close your eyes and imagine softball-sized balls of white light, filled with love, shooting up from the ground, through your body and up into the sky. When they get high in the sky, imagine that they explode into beautiful colors of energy. They should behave exactly like fireworks, reaching up high into the sky and bursting with beautiful, peaceful colored energy all around you.

It helps to imagine a whooshing sound as the energy balls shoot up through your body. As each energy ball passes through your head, imagine that it lights up your “crown chakra” or energy center that sits just above the top of your head.

I first developed this exercise when I was listening to the song “And You And I” by Yes. The song has musical notes that climb upward, then fall back down like fireworks. I'd time my imaginary fireworks to the music.

Chapter 25

“Fly me high through the starry skies,

Maybe to an astral plane,

Cross the highways of fantasy

Help me to forget today's pain”

--Gary Wright, “Dream Weaver”

Dream Weaver

I decided that the best way to find my soulmate was to get involved in some special interest groups. I reasoned that if her interests were similar to mine, she might belong to a metaphysical club, so I joined a very small, loosely-knit student organization at the University called MSPR, the Minnesota Society for Parapsychological Research.

At first I started helping them with answering phones and doing ghost investigations: people would call MSPR and ask us to solve their ghost problems. This was in the early 1980s, before the movie “Ghostbusters” came out. At first, all I could do was visit the home and give the family information about ghosts and poltergeists and how their fears only made things worse.

The information I gave helped most families, but one case was particularly tough. The poor mother kept calling back, almost hysterical, saying that they couldn't sleep: they were still being tormented by the ghost.

I was at a loss. Trying to be helpful, I said, “I'll see what I can do.”

That Sunday, I went back to the Spiritualist church. After the service I met with Birdie and explained the situation. She closed her eyes, tilted her head upward and said, “Yes, I see them.” Then she opened her eyes and looked back at me. “I'll have my spirit guides take care of it.”

About a month later, the family called the MSPR hot-line again. This time she told me the problems went on for a few days after she called, and then suddenly stopped. The house became completely quiet and everyone slept comfortably for the first time in years. She said, “I don't know what you did, but it worked! Thank you so much!”

A week or two later, I did another ghost investigation. This time I didn't mess around. I went back to Birdie's church and thanked her for her help with the first case. Then I told her about the next ghost. She said, “I'll take care of it. Next time, don't bother to ask. Just talk to your spirit guides and ask them to talk to my guides about it. They'll know what to do and take it from there.”

I thanked her and walked away, pretending I knew what I was doing. But how was I supposed to do that? Thanks to my “inner arguments” and my message from the spirit who called herself “Julia” I had determined that my inner voice was not a spirit, but somehow I hadn't considered that I might

have spirit guides of my own. And even if I can't hear them, they could probably hear my thoughts.

From then on, I followed Birdie's directions, silently appealing to my spirit guides for help with every ghost investigation. A week after the investigation, I'd call the family back and ask how it was going. And in every case, the family's ghost problems went away.

Besides the ghost investigations, MSPR published a newsletter and organized lectures from psychics, authors and authorities on new-age topics. We sponsored lectures from people like Professor Mulford Q. Sibley (author of books on life after death), and Professor Otto Schmitt (a scientist, inventor, and parapsychologist with three Ph.D. degrees).

By January 1984, I was president of MSPR and as such, it was my responsibility to line up lectures each month. On one particular occasion I couldn't find any prestigious authorities willing to give a lecture. Instead, I did the next best thing: I organized a telekinesis / psychokinesis “spoon bending” experiment. I called it the PK party.

By that time, I had lots of connections in the Twin Cities metaphysical community. As a result, I started to come out of my shell. I started to tell more people about my out-of-body experiences, but I was still pretty tight-lipped about my inner voice. It was my dirty little secret.

On the night of the experiment, fifteen people showed up to test their skills. One woman who came claimed to be psychic and could see spirits. She looked me over from head to toe, then told me I had the most beautiful

golden aura she had ever seen. I took that with a grain of salt. I couldn't see auras, so I felt like a spiritual misfit. Then, as though stating the obvious, she said “You're clairaudient. You know that, don't you?”

I didn't know quite what to say. I understood clairaudience to be the ability to hear spirit voices and, yeah, I did actually “hear” Julia, but that didn't exactly make me clairaudient, did it? On the other hand, I had read an article that said that inner voice was related to clairaudience. Maybe she was referring to that ability, I thought. I guess I had been getting psychic information, but not visually, so maybe it still counted. I shrugged and stammered, “Well...I don't know...I guess...kind of.” I hadn't admitted it to myself, let alone anyone else. I felt uncomfortable about this admission, so I turned my attention back to the PK party.

We tried to bend spoons and turn paper pyramids balanced on a needle, but for all our effort, we didn't see any paranormal effects. Most of the people left out of boredom. To the people who remained it became obvious that, individually, none of us had any telekinetic skills. Our only hope to salvage the experiment was to focus on something as a group (and spread the blame!)

After a brief discussion, we agreed on a group experiment. We decided to have someone lie across two table tops and the rest of us would gather around and try to use our combined energy to levitate the subject into the air. We figured that if each of us focused on a single area, we might be able to do better collectively.

We also decided that because we were all such failures at spoon bending, the best test subject would be the person who weighed the least. That turned out to be a black-haired beauty with big fawn-eyes named Michelle and she

volunteered eagerly for the experiment. I prayed to God I'd be able to maintain my focus because she was incredibly—painfully—beautiful: pure eye-candy.

We pushed two tables together and Michelle climbed on top. A group of us gathered around her. Unlike everyone else, I positioned myself strategically at her feet, where I'd be less distracted by her gorgeous body. Then we all closed our eyes and tried to levitate her.

After several minutes of silence, Michelle hadn't moved. She had gone into some kind of trance (or maybe she was sleeping). It looked like this experiment would be a failure like the others. Then the psychic woman, who stood near Michelle's head, said she saw three spirit guides. Another woman claimed that she had called the guides there.

All this talk about spirit guides gave me an idea. By this time I had begun to accept the idea that spirits might actually be helpful. I decided to mentally call out to my own spirit guides, if in fact they even existed. In my mind I said, “Okay, guys, I give you permission to use all the energy you want of mine to produce any physical effects you like. Go for it! Let's raise her feet!” I psyched myself up in anticipation.

Suddenly, Michelle opened her eyes, jerked upright and screeched, “Someone just tickled my feet!”

Since I was the only one near her feet, everyone turned and stared at me, demanding an explanation, but of course, I had not touched her. But oh, how I wanted to!

After the PK party, I started talking to Michelle's boyfriend, a fellow student named Mike B. He was an interesting guy and we had a lot in common.

The next Friday morning, I was waiting to park at the University's parking ramp. As I waited in line to get into the ramp, bored, I asked my inner voice to give me a song to hum. At once, it sent me the song “Dream Weaver” by Gary Wright, and I started humming the tune. It seemed a bit odd because I didn't even own that song. I didn't particularly care for Gary Wright's music either; I preferred harder rock. After I parked I went to my normal Friday classes.

After class, I had planned to drive to work, but for some reason my inner voice talked me into staying at the University a while longer.

I was talking to a friend in the basement of Lind Hall when Michelle's boyfriend, Mike B., walked in. He was heading to the Coffman Union building and since that was the direction of my parking ramp, we decided to walk together. We started talking about life, music and psychic abilities and I was astounded: we were very much alike. We decided to eat lunch together and continue our discussion indoors; out of the crisp January air.

Mike used to read science books as a kid, just like me. I told him about my OBEs and some of the incidents I later wrote about in my first book. He told me some of his own incredible stories. We were so much alike, it was frightening. It was one of those instant friendships.

Then we started talking about music. He asked, “What kind of music do you like?”

I said, “Well, I really like Kansas.” He said, “Me too: Dust in the Wind.”

I said, “My favorite band of all time is Yes.” He said, “Me too: Owner of a Lonely Heart.”

I said, “I also like Vangelis and the work he had done with Yes's singer, Jon Anderson.” I mentioned Styx, Boston and several others. Strangely, we loved the same music.

Mike wasn't a computer science major, so I asked him why he had come to Lind Hall where all the geeks hung out. He said that he just felt “guided” to go there on his way to Coffman Union. Hm,I wondered. That sounded a lot like my inner voice. I had to pry.

Since he had been at the “PK party”, I reasoned that he must be open-minded to metaphysical ideas. I cautiously told him about my inner voice and my wisdom game. Much to my surprise, he said he also talked to his inner voice!

At first I found that very hard to believe. It was too big of a coincidence. Still, the more he talked about it, the more I realized it was the same thing: Finally, I had met another person who also talked to an inner voice like I did. I was excited.

Mike asked me, “Hey, does your inner voice send you songs at the most perfect time? Like, with impeccable timing?”

“Absolutely,” I told him. “It happens all the time. So often that people wouldn't even believe me. Hell, I wouldn't even believe such a wild claim. I don't even bother telling anyone because I'd never expect them to believe me.”

“Me too.” he said.

We both stood there in awe, not knowing what else to say.

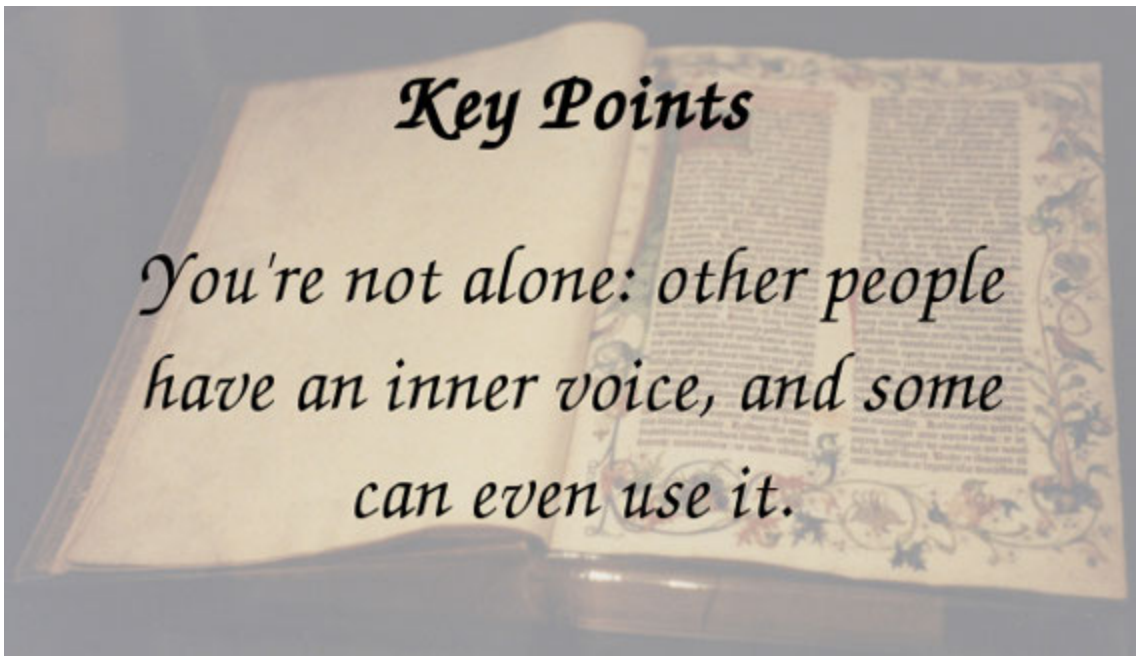
Finally, something in my mind snapped. My inner skeptic reared its ugly head with a vengeance: This was way too convenient. Was Mike leading me on? Was he just telling me what I wanted to hear? There were just too many coincidences to be believed. Besides, I couldn't believe that someone else actually had the ability to talk to their inner voice; there just weren't any books or classes on it.

I turned to Mike and gave him the kind of smile that can only be exchanged between age-old friends. I said “Prove it.”

His eyes turned away while he consulted his inner voice, then he turned to me and said, “Dream Weaver.” My jaw dropped. It was the same song my

own inner voice had given me earlier, by an artist neither of us cared for!

After lunch, I walked back to the parking ramp and got in my car to go to work. I started the car and turned on the radio. The radio station was tuned to KQRS and they happened to be playing “Dust in the Wind” by Kansas. Hm, I thought, that's a cool coincidence: that was the first song Mike had mentioned by name. Still, it was their most popular song, so it wasn't that impressive.



I drove to the exit and paid the attendant for my parking as the song ended. As I turned right onto East River Road, KQRS started another song. It was “Owner of a Lonely Heart,” the second song Mike had mentioned by name. Now that was just plain spooky.

I could tell my inner voice was highly amused. Mike had indeed been guided to go to Lind Hall, and so had I. My “chance meeting” with him had

all been carefully orchestrated. It's not inaccurate to say my inner voice was “Laughing its ass off.” Well, if it had an ass.

Let's Play!
Asking for Songs
Ask your inner voice to send you a song. Wait until a song pops into your mind. Think about that song and how it pertains to your life.

Chapter 26

“You think a little more money can buy your soul some rest.

You'd better think of something else instead.

You're so afraid of being honest with yourself.

You'd better take a look inside your head.”

--Triumph, “Fight the Good Fight”

Self-Deception

A couple years passed and I graduated from the University, left MSPR and got a full-time job. My search for my soulmate had been fruitless. Frustrated with life and hungry for change, I sold my Honda CB125 motorcycle and bought a Honda 750. Then I sold the 750 and bought a Harley Davidson, a sign of rebellion.

By then, my brother's business in Arizona had grown and he needed more computer help. I took that as a sign to move to Arizona in 1986 to continue my search.

My best friend, John, was also fed up with Minnesota and wanted to move. We decided to caravan to Arizona together. So we quit our jobs, packed our belongings into a U-Haul trailer and hit the road.

I burned out my car's transmission pulling the trailer and had to camp for three days in Council Bluffs, Iowa, while it was repaired. My inner voice insisted everything was alright.

When John and I arrived in Phoenix, it was the fourth of July and hotter than hell. It was 115F degrees in the shade for over a week, and we were miserable. Still, my inner voice insisted everything was alright.

After I moved, I remembered the Yes quote: “As the game extends the cycle, be ready to move.” I now knew the meaning of the mysterious words: extending the cycle meant selling my motorcycle and buying another. Another metaphor. By the time I had sold the 750 and bought the Harley, I had indeed been ready to move.

Arizona had a lot of advantages over Minnesota. For one thing, the winters didn’t suck. Outside of MSPR, there wasn't a big metaphysical community in Minnesota so I didn't have many friends. In Arizona, I made lots of friends with similar interests. Unfortunately, I still didn't find my soulmate. I took a lot of walks and asked a lot of questions, but I got “I can't tell you that” a lot.

In an effort to find my soulmate, I spent many nights engaging my inner voice and typing its answers into the computer. It taught me a lot and helped me communicate more easily. I could ask virtually anything and it would answer reliably.

At that time, Arizona had a lottery and Minnesota didn't and since I was dirt poor, I thought: let's see how far I can take it! I walked down to the local Circle K convenience store and picked up a lottery form, then used my protocol: “What is love?”

“Love is the only thing that counts, the immeasurable riches of the Universe.”

“What are tonight's lottery numbers?”

I mentally fished for numbers. I wrote down the first numbers that came into my mind: 3, 21, 47, 48, 59, 31. I handed the cashier my form and paid my dollar. I could hardly wait until the next lottery drawing.

My experiment was a dismal failure. I didn't get a single number right. I went over and over it in my mind. I had done everything right: I had initiated the protocol, started the stream of communication and fished for the answers. They had just been wrong. No matter how hard I tried, I just couldn't figure out what went wrong. Finally, I asked my inner voice. “Did you lie to me?”

“Nope. You lied to yourself.”

“Where did those numbers come from?”

“Self-Deception. You made them up.”

Perplexed, I scratched my head. “Isn't that what I always do when I talk to you?”

“There's a subtle difference.”

I was bummed. Maybe there's still a way to make this work, I thought. “Can you give me the correct lottery numbers?”

“No.”

“Why not? Wait, wait, let me guess: It would interfere with my life-lesson.”

“Correct.”

I breathed a heavy sigh. Okay, so maybe I'm not rich, but I guess that was all right. Jesus reportedly said “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 19:24). Maybe he meant that winning the lottery would end my OBEs or that I’d go to hell when I die. Still, I might be willing to take the risk!

Let's Play!
Simplify With Yes/No Questions
Make time to take more walks alone. Use that time to chat with your inner voice. At first, use simple yes/no questions and repeat them to yourself until either "yes" or "no" stands out in your mind as more applicable to your question.

Musical Interlude #7

"Whole Lotta Love" (Live) by Led Zeppelin

This is another rock and roll song, not a meditation song. Its music isn't particularly uplifting and its lyrics aren't spiritual, but like many of the other songs I've suggested, the music moves between the ears, and that can increase your psychic sensitivity. I recommend the live version from the album "The Song Remains the Same" because in some parts of the song, the music seems to race around and around your head in big swooping circles. The studio version from Led Zeppelin II doesn't have the same ear-switches.

As you listen, pretend that the sounds are coming from a ball of light suspended in space that circles around your head. Follow the imaginary ball of light with your mind as it travels around your head.

Chapter 27

“Have you ever been lonely?

Afraid to speak your mind?

Are you ever reminded

To trust the voice inside?”

--Queensrÿche, “The Voice Inside”

Service

I lived in Arizona for about a year and a half. I made some wonderful friends, but still didn't find my soulmate there. My brother Joe joined John and I, and the three of us shared a small apartment. We barely made ends meet.

That December, Joe and I flew back to Minneapolis to visit our family for Christmas. During our visit, Joe dragged me to a job interview where the company made me a job offer I couldn't refuse. We hastily flew back to Phoenix, packed up a U-Haul and drove back to Minnesota through a terrible blizzard.

Then in 1987, after many life-lessons about love, I finally met my soulmate, Kathy. We were married in 1992. I won't go into details here, but it's all in

my second book, Lessons Out of the Body. However, I did want to share a story from that book about my inner voice and rendering service.

In May 1996, Kathy and I had both been in Rochester for more than nine years, and decided to move back to Minneapolis to be closer to our families. We sent out resumes and interviewed with prospective employers. The task of job-hunting was a relatively new experience for me, because I had never found a job before. As I explained before, up to that point, perfect computer jobs always found me through long and humorously complex series of coincidences, and hints from my inner voice.

On one occasion, Kathy and I took a day off of work to drive to Minneapolis for some event and Kathy scheduled a job interview for the afternoon. I didn't know how long Kathy's interview would last, so rather than waiting in the car, I dropped her off and opted to spend the afternoon at nearby Southdale shopping mall.

Once inside the mall, I noticed there were very few people there. I didn't feel much like shopping, so I decided to have some fun. As I calmed my mind and tried to raise my vibrations, a strange tingling sensation came over me. The tingling went up my spine and out through the top of my head, and I felt strangely empowered. In the past, that sensation always meant something important was happening.

I decided to follow my intuition and initiated a dialog with my inner voice. "Let's have some fun. Which way should I go?" I playfully asked my inner voice. I could feel my inner voice grinning at me mischievously, giving me a gentle "Let's go this way," but instead of starting a nonverbal dialogue with my inner voice in the usual way, I just closed my eyes and let its guidance take me in any direction. Automatically following my inner

guidance, I walked forward several steps, turned sharply to the right, and strolled down a particularly deserted hallway in the mall. I occasionally opened my eyes to make sure I wasn't going to bump into anything.

When I reached the end of the hall, I opened my eyes again and looked around at the shops. Then I looked down. At my feet was a man lying on the ground, and he wasn't breathing! Oh my God, I thought, what should I do? This man is dying, and I don't have any medical training and I don't know CPR.

The first thing I did was run to a nearby store and tell the store clerk to "Call the paramedics down here now!" Then I ran back to the man to see what I could do to help. The man's right hand was moving slowly and his eyes were moving, so I knew he was still alive, but he still wasn't breathing. I looked around on the ground, and noticed a small bottle-like object lying next to the man: It was some kind of inhaler like those used by asthma patients. Now I knew what was happening: the man had had an attack of asthma and that's why he couldn't breathe. I didn't have a clue how to use the inhaler, so I stuck the thing in his mouth and pressed down on the button, releasing a small spray on the man's tongue.

By this time a nearby store clerk came over to watch, and she said that the inhaler spray probably needed to reach his lungs and that the spray on his tongue wouldn't be good enough. So I stuck the inhaler deeper inside the man's mouth, covered the rest of his mouth, and sprayed the medication down his throat once more, trying to avoid the tongue. Then I set the inhaler down on the ground, squatted next to the man, held my open palms over the man's chest and started summoning the tingling energy I felt earlier.

At once, a stream of energy started flowing through my body, through my palms and into the man's body. Then I tried to consciously "tell" his brain, "Breathe again, dammit." What's taking those paramedics? I wondered. I tried to psychically command his heart to continue pumping. "Pump, dammit."

A minute or so later, two paramedics came rushing through the hallway with their medical bags in hand. When they reached the man, I stopped the flow of energy from my hands, stood up and let them do their job. At once, they started checking the man's vital statistics and administered the care he needed.

As I walked away, my body was bristling with an inner fire that stayed with me until late into the evening. I tried to shop for a few minutes, but I was too pumped up with a mixture of adrenalin and psychic energy, so I went back to check on the man. He was breathing again and talking with the para-medics. A few minutes later, he was sitting up, obviously feeling much better. I thought about born-again Christians and wondered how they can claim that psychic abilities and the inner voice are tricks of Satan. Then I wondered why my inner voice had not given me more of a sense of urgency, but I realized that would have interfered more than helped me in finding the man.

I never spoke to the man. It was enough to know that he was all right, and that I probably saved his life. When Kathy picked me up, she told me all about her job interview, then she asked me what I did all afternoon. "Not much," I replied calmly, "I wandered around the mall...did some shopping... saved a man's life."

Kathy made me tell the whole story.

“So you’re a hero.” she said afterward.

“No,” I replied, “I’m no hero. My brother Tom is a fireman and he’s saved a lot more lives than I ever have or ever will. He’s the hero of the family.”

“But you never even gave that guy a chance to thank you.”

“I don’t want any thanks. Helping people is enough reward; besides, he probably didn’t even know I helped him.”

“He knew,” my inner voice said to me in a voice Kathy could not hear.

Let's Play!
Random Walk
Some day when you have free time, close your eyes and let your inner voice pick a direction, then open your eyes and walk. Try to feel what's around you in all directions and if any particular direction feels more important, walk that way.

Chapter 28

“Believe – Transcend the pain

Living the life – Humility

Opened my eyes – This new odyssey

Of rigorous honesty”

--Dream Theater, “The Glass Prison”

Misled

Up to this point, I may have given you the impression that my inner voice is the voice of clarity and truth: straightforward, upright and brutally honest. As much as I'd like that to be true, it isn't always that straightforward. In fact, my inner voice has deliberately misled me at times.

Actually, it's done it many times, but I don't want to give you the wrong impression. It's always been for my own good, and it always works out for the best.

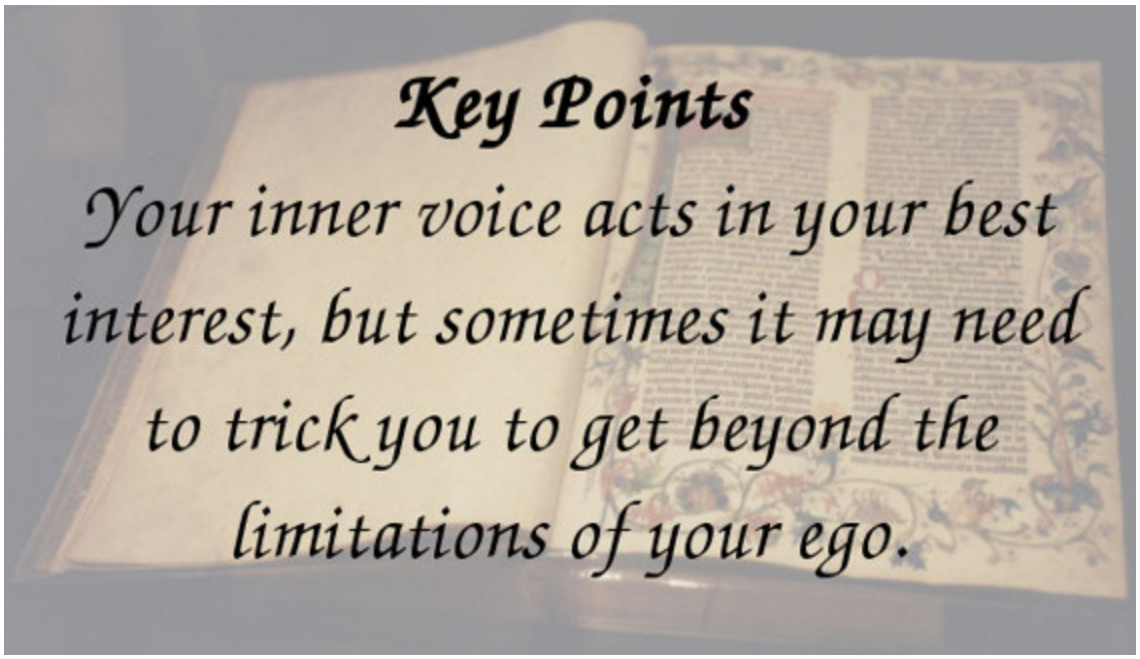
It's more accurate to say that sometimes I make assumptions based on something my inner voice says, and later my assumptions turn out to be wrong. My inner voice doesn't correct my mistake, though, because the faulty assumption leads to an outcome that's beneficial.

My inner voice uses my faulty assumptions as a defense against my doubts. It's a trick to get me “outside the box” of my own belief system. I've come to accept it as a necessary means to achieve a desired end, goal or lesson. At times, it feels like a dirty trick, but there's really no deception.

For example, you may recall the experience in chapter 20 where my inner voice suggested I bring my bag of tools on my motorcycle because “it would come in handy” and I'd “regret it” if I didn't. I naturally assumed I would need them to fix my motorcycle: that's why I have those tools in the first place. My inner voice hadn't deceived me at all: it even had said my motorcycle was fine, and yet I'd worried about a breakdown the whole day.

My inner voice wasn't being deceptive. It just didn't disclose everything. As much as you want it to be the case, your inner voice does not have a full-disclosure clause in its contract!

At first it bothered me, but then I realized that we all do the same thing. We're worse, in fact. We make our kids believe in the Tooth Fairy, Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. That's pure deception, but we tell ourselves it's harmless.

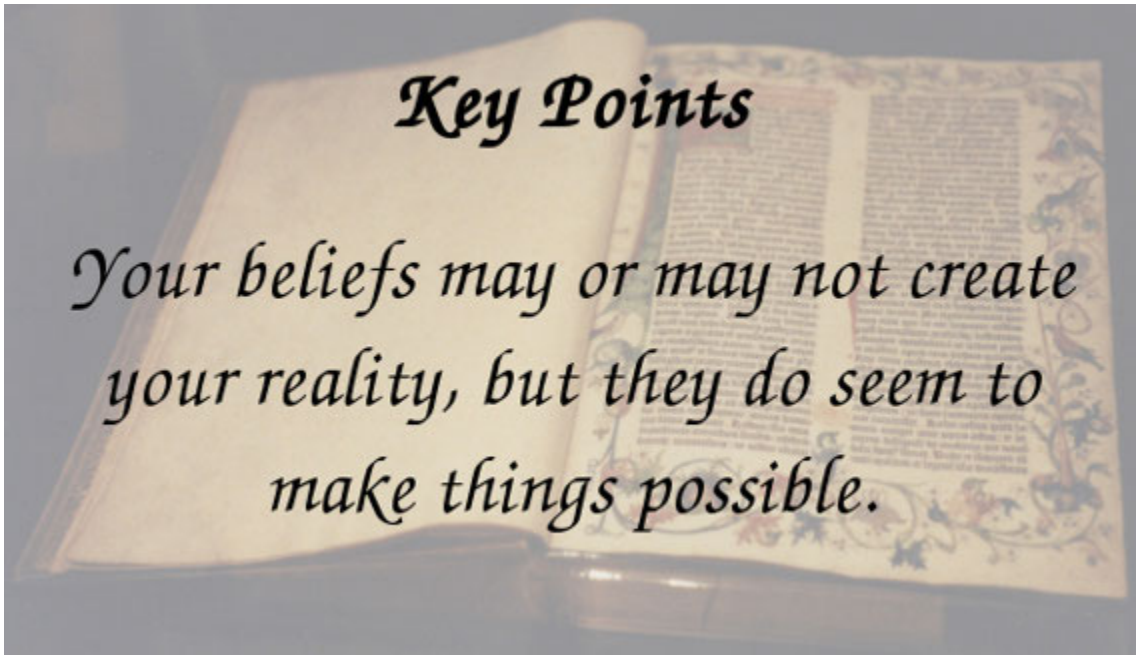

Key Points
Your inner voice acts in your best interest, but sometimes it may need to trick you to get beyond the limitations of your ego.

One day, while I was halfway through writing this book in 2010, my wife Kathy won a $100.00 gift card for a grocery store near our lake cottage, 130 miles north of Minneapolis. That week, my inner voice suggested I fill some Ziploc bags full of ice from the freezer's ice maker "...just in case you want some ice in the future." That sounded reasonable, so I bagged the ice as suggested.

That Thursday, Kathy placed a large order at the grocery store, mostly meat, to be picked up. When Friday came, she took the day off and drove up North early to spend her gift card. Normally we drive together, but on this occasion we needed to drive there separately.

After work that day, I went home and packed my car to join her. As I was about to leave, my inner voice said, "You should pack a cooler with ice." Good idea, I thought; Kathy will need it to transport all that meat home.

I looked for our cooler but it wasn't where we kept it. I figured Kathy had already taken it with her to transport the groceries. I argued with my inner voice, “Kathy's already got a cooler; I don't need to bring another.”



It said, “Bring one anyway. Fill it with the ice you bagged earlier in the week.”

I countered, “Why? She's the smartest woman I know; I'm sure she planned ahead.”

“Her cooler won't be big enough and she won't have enough ice.”

I looked in the freezer and discovered most of the ice I had bagged earlier was still there. So maybe she hadn't brought enough. I argued back anyway.

“It's not that much meat. It will all fit in one cooler. Besides, if something won't fit, we can just store it in the freezer and bring it back another time.”

It insisted. “She'll want to bring it all home.”

I decided to drop the subject there, stop arguing and just follow its advice. I had known from too many years of experience that it was right, for whatever reason. I found a second cooler, packed it full of ice and headed up north.

The next evening, at the cottage, I went to get a can of soda pop out of the refrigerator and discovered it was not cold. When I checked the freezer, I discovered the ice cream had melted and turned to soup. The compressor on the refrigerator had burned out and stopped working.

With the refrigerator at the cottage dead, Kathy and I were forced to take everything out and pack it into our coolers to transport it back home.

Thanks to my inner voice and its little ruse, we had a second cooler and lots of ice so we were able to save all the food. While it hadn't exactly lied, I had been misled to believe that I needed the extra ice and cooler for a different reason.

Some religious fanatics might point to this and say, “See? Your inner voice uses deception as a tool! Surely this is Satan leading you into sin!” I don't buy that for a single minute. First of all, it never lied. It just used my own

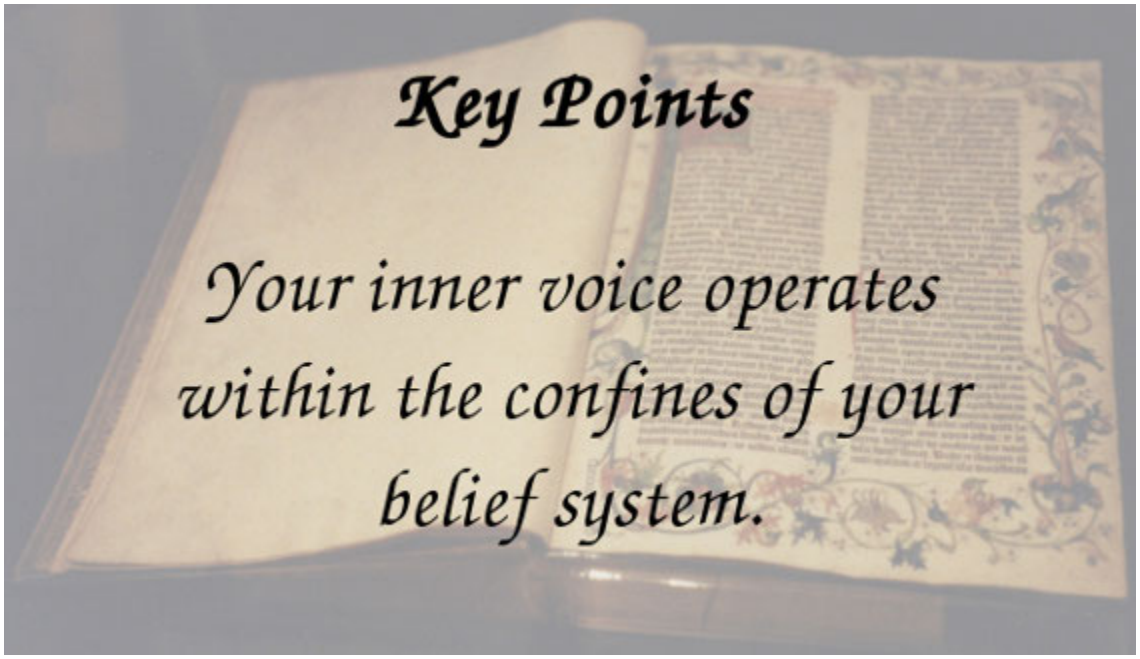
faulty assumptions in a manipulative way. Second, it's just silly that Satan would help me save a refrigerator full of food.

Tips and Tricks
Change your beliefs to enable positive changes in your life.
Remain open-minded: A closed mind gathers no change.
Take advice but keep control.
Trust but verify.

Now you might wonder: if your inner voice can manipulate and mislead you, can you really trust it? If your next life-lesson is about physical pain, should you put on a blindfold and walk across the freeway at the risk of getting hit by a car if it tells you to? No. Absolutely not. As I said before, always use common sense before you follow your inner voice's advice. Your inner voice should always act in your best interest, so trust but verify. Take its advice when it makes sense, but keep control.

Skeptics would probably ask why my inner voice didn't just come out and say “Your refrigerator at the cabin is going to die.” Maybe it should have, but here's why I believe it didn't:

My inner voice seems to operate within the confines of my belief system and it prefers to send me the most believable images. In other words, it's not going to suggest far-out remote possibilities.



Since the refrigerator had been reliable for years and I couldn't envision it breaking down that weekend, my inner voice would probably not try to use that remote possibility to justify an action.

It's almost as if our lives run on probable outcomes and your inner voice can only push buttons within a limited reach to affect reality.

That information has very important implications. It means that believing in something makes it easier for you to bring it into reality. Believing that you are psychic opens that possibility to you and makes it easier for the "powers that be" to develop your psychic abilities. Believing that you are smart helps you be smarter. Believing that you are loved helps you be loved, and so on.

This notion that your beliefs create your reality has been taught by many teachers and been around a long time. In the 1970s, Jane Roberts' "Seth" books insist that your beliefs create your reality. It also appears in several books and videos like "The Secret" You may have also heard it called the "Law of Attraction." In chapter 30, I'll go into depth on how you can manifest what you want by harnessing the power of your inner voice. But before you do that, you should understand what your inner voice really is.

Let's Play!
Identifying and Changing Beliefs
Identify a change you want in your life. Next, isolate and counter the beliefs you have that are holding you back from your goal. Believe that it could actually happen. For example, you don't have to believe that you have a new job, but you should believe it's possible to get one. Next, convince yourself it's not only possible, but likely.

Psychic Sensitivity Exercise #7

Meditation

I used to think that meditation was an exotic practice from the Far East, taught only by Yogis and Buddhists, and adapted to fit new age teachers. Not true. All spiritual traditions teach meditation. Christians call theirs the Rosary. In Islam, meditation is taught by the Sufis. In China, T'ai Chi Chuan is regarded by many as "moving meditation."

So as a spiritual teacher, I would be remiss if I didn't include an exercise that involves meditation.

I know your time is precious and you don't want to spend it meditating. I struggle with this too. But meditating is worthwhile, and it's something you can modify to fit your schedule. You can start out meditating as little as fifteen seconds, and as you learn to value it more, increase it as long as you like.

Here's what I recommend: Sit in a comfortable chair, close your eyes and try to make your mind as quiet as possible. If your mind is particularly noisy and unfocused, imagine there is a low-pitched hum playing in the background of your mind. Focus your attention on the imaginary hum. Do this as long as you want.

When you're tired of that, focus your attention on your third-eye area like sensitivity exercise 4. When you're tired of that, focus your attention on both temples like sensitivity exercise 5 at the end of chapter 21. When you're done with that, imagine that a ball of light is circling around your head like many of the "musical interlude" exercises.

Chapter 29

“And though our hearts may turn,

It's only when you listen

That you learn”

--Dan Fogelberg, “Gypsy Wind”

What Is Your Inner Voice?

By now, you should know what your inner voice can do. Hopefully you've also followed my examples, learned the process and started developing your own inner voice. But don't stop there. Since knowledge is power, in order to harness the full power of your inner voice you need to understand what your inner voice is, and that gets technical.

To understand what your inner voice is, you need to understand a few basic concepts. First of all, you need to understand that you are much more than the person you think you are, and I mean that in a very literal sense.

More than a hundred years ago, Sigmund Freud wrote about the human personality being comprised of many parts: the ego or “id”, the subconscious, and so forth. I don't ascribe to Freud's beliefs, but he was on to something.

There are, in fact, many different personalities inside each of us. I'm not just speculating here; I've experienced it firsthand. During my first conscious out-of-body experience (OBE) (described in detail in my first book), I experienced not only dual-consciousness, but consciousness split five ways: I was five distinct personalities at the same time, but in case you're wondering: no, I don't suffer from Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) aka Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD). Others have also experienced split-consciousness firsthand.

There are several levels or layers of consciousness, and each layer has its own unique identity, awareness and knowledge. Each level can significantly influence your life.

At face value, that may sound like some kind of new-age nonsense, but there's also a scientific explanation: that's how the human brain works.

Many people think of the brain as being like a computer's CPU (Central Processing Unit), but as a computer professional, I can tell you there are differences: CPUs are digital devices and although a computer can have multiple “cores” to process instructions, each core can only work on one thing at a time: they need sophisticated programming (called a scheduler) that rapidly switches between the different jobs (sometimes called processes, threads, or tasks).

The brain, on the other hand, is an analog device. Brain scans reveal that several areas of the brain “light up” with electro-chemical activity simultaneously: in other words, many areas of the brain are always busy doing many things: analyzing sights, smells, sounds and touches, storing

and retrieving memories, assessing immediate threats and assessing lower-priority threats.

The different areas of the brain work at different speeds and process information differently. For example, if you see a man, the visual image is routed immediately to the visual cortex at the back of your head, where it's translated and routed to multiple areas. One of those areas is an “immediate threat” area, and it's very fast and can cause an immediate fear reaction. Another area at the front of the brain is slower, and it's left to analyze whether the man is “logically” a threat or not. There's also special facial recognition software built in.

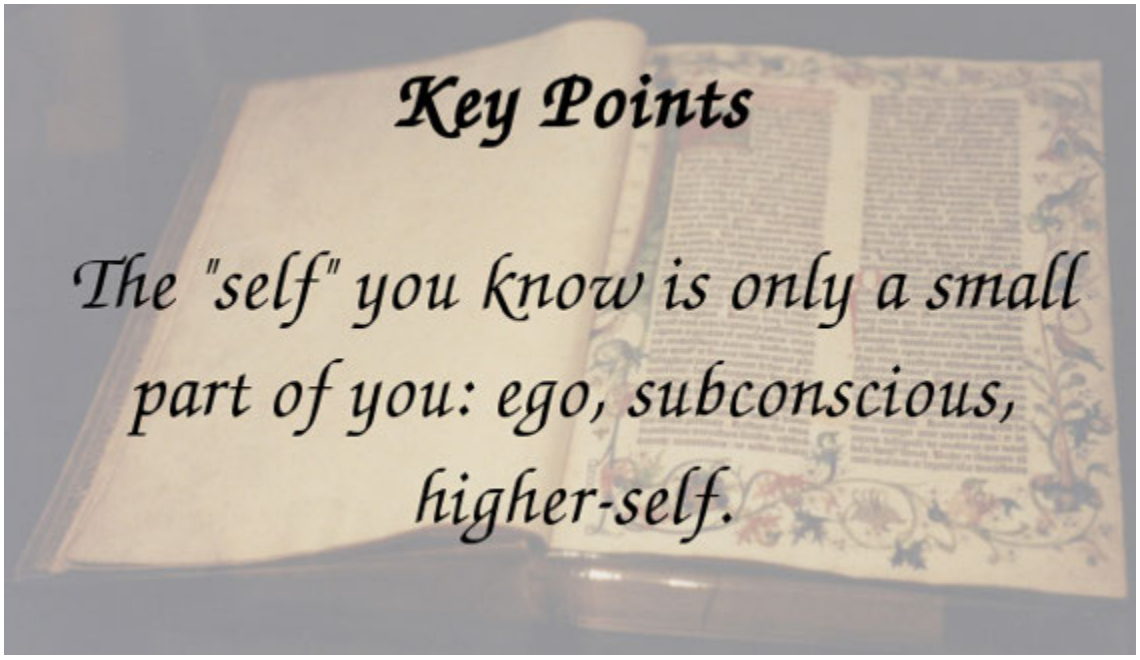
Among all this, the brain is also simultaneously giving rise to many thoughts. This complex brain activity is then run through amazing and complex “this isn't important” filters and what comes out the other end—usually your most dominant thought—is what we call consciousness. If those filters are artificially disabled, for example by drugs like LSD, the effect is overwhelming.

What are the levels of consciousness? Different psychologists have different theories, but here's what I think: First, there is body-consciousness. Your physical body is a machine programmed for several things, mostly related to survival.

The next closest level is your conscious self. Some call it the ego or the little self. It is the day-to-day self we most identify with, the person who watches a sitcom on television and laughs. It's mostly concerned with day-to-day issues and matters of survival.

Just “beneath” the conscious self is the subconscious. As many psychiatrists and psychologists know, the subconscious is the home of latent fears, desires, concerns, inspirations and a whole lot of things that are below the surface of our consciousness.

There's another deeper level that most people don't know about. I know this from experience because in developing my out-of-body techniques I've been able to watch what this other self does when we're asleep. I've also devised ways to covertly “sneak” my conscious awareness past this normally vigilant guardian of the threshold, much like a broke teenager might sneak into a dark movie theater. You can think of it as the sub-subconscious. It is more than just a vague collection of anxieties and neuroses that influence you. This is another complete self that has its own ambitions, plans and motivations, and they directly affect your life. This sub-subconscious takes control when you fall asleep and leads a separate life. Its nightly excursions are only vaguely remembered as dream sequences, intermixed with all your other normal dreams.



There are more levels below the sub-subconscious, but unlike the others, I don't have firsthand experience of them, so I'm speculating:

I believe that below the sub-subconscious is what people commonly call their higher self, the atman or the oversoul. The oversoul is the level at which our life-lessons are planned and the details of our lives are plotted and schemed.

Many people believe in an inevitable outcome of their lives, also known as their fate or destiny. I believe there's no such thing as fate or destiny; those terms are used to describe the plans and lessons your higher self has for your life, which by their very nature may be very difficult (but not impossible) to change.

I also believe that there are more levels beyond that: A higher-higher self, a higher-higher-higher self and so forth. If you follow it up to its top level, the "highest self," is also known as God, Yahweh, Allah, Tao, and various other words. That's pure speculation, but it's what I believe.

If true, my speculation implies that we're all connected to one another at some level (which makes hate and prejudice look very foolish). It also explains the existence of telepathy and other paranormal phenomena. I think my position is only strengthened by author Dean Radin who uses entanglement theory to explain our interconnectedness in his book Entangled Minds.

We're not just connected to living people, but the souls of the dead too. Thus, the information presented by channelers may very well be from

discarnate souls (dead people, or people who haven't been born).

It also means that we're also all connected to God, whether or not we're aware of it.

So how does all this relate to my original question, “What is your inner voice?” Your inner voice is simply a communication channel that reaches from your conscious self, through your subconscious, and up to your higher self.

In simpler terms, you're communicating with your subconscious—a normal, natural thing—and your subconscious is communicating with deeper parts of you that have access to deeper knowledge and wisdom.

So when people talk to ghosts, spirit guides, channeled entities, or angels, are they all just using their inner-voice like I do? Is it all just different words for the same thing? Since I am not them, I have no way of knowing. Maybe some day brain scans will shed some light on the question.

Now that you know about your other selves and how your inner voice relates to them, the next step is to use that knowledge to your advantage.

Let's Play!
Watching for Other Selves
Try to fall asleep while remaining conscious. In other words, fall asleep as you normally would, but try to keep a tiny fragment of consciousness aware of what happens. With enough practice, you'll be able to witness some of your other selves.

Chapter 30

“It's all inside of me, the answers lie within

And all that I can win, I take for myself

I'm the one who holds the key, To all that I can be

My spirit yearns for truth, It's learning to be free”

--Stratovarius, “Awaken The Giant”

Manifesting

We've all heard a lot of talk these days about “manifesting.” We all want to bring good things into our lives: money, possessions, relationships, power or whatever. Lately it's been fashionable for spiritual teachers to offer advice on how to manifest these things. I'll add my two cents to the mix and explain how it relates to your inner voice.

I believe the key to manifesting is understanding the mechanics of how it works. The same could be said of many aspects of life. Just imagine what you could do with a computer if you had a deep understanding of how it worked at all levels: hardware, software, and all the layers in between.

I won't pretend to know everything about the mechanics of life, just like I won't pretend to know everything about computers, but I will explain what I

do know. Armed with that knowledge, you should be able to better manifest the things you want in life.

First, it may help to hear what others have written about the topic.

As I mentioned earlier, the entity “Seth,” channeled through author Jane Roberts, insisted that “your beliefs create your reality.” There's a great deal of truth to that, but if that were the whole story, the real estate market would not have fallen apart in 2007 with all the borrowers who firmly believed they could afford their bloated mortgages.

Other authors modified Seth's creed slightly and suggested that reality follows desire or intent. Some have suggested using visualizations or affirmations to manifest what you want. Those are just ways to modify your beliefs, and modifying your beliefs is definitely a prerequisite to manifesting.

Authors like Lynn Grabhorn (Excuse Me, Your Life Is Waiting), take it a bit further and insist that your physical reality will follow your intent, but only in accordance with the strength of your emotions. In other words, you have to powerfully “feel” what you want. There's some truth to that too, but if that was all it took, every sixteen-year old boy would have a sex-crazed girlfriend. And the fact that they don't is not for lack of desire, intent, affirmations, visualization or emotional backing!

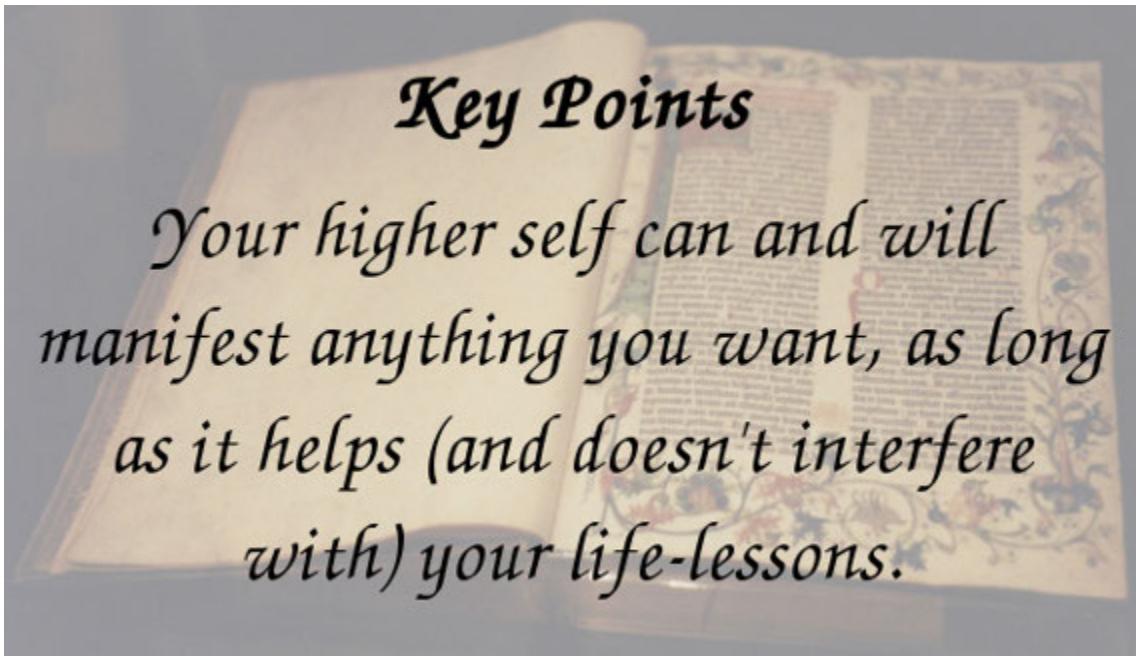
Other books like The Secret and What The Bleep Do We Know? all have slightly different approaches to manifesting.

Armed with all this advice, we modify our beliefs, we visualize, we affirm, we aim our intent, we use our emotions, but when we don't get what we want we're disappointed. Then we kick ourselves for doing it wrong or having the tiniest of doubts, or for not believing strongly enough. Then we dust ourselves off and try again. But the quest to make our lives better seems like a battle at times.

In the previous chapter I explained the different aspects of your “self” and how your inner voice fits in. The key to manifesting is understanding what those different parts of you are doing and how to leverage all that to get what you want.

Your inner voice is designed to help you learn your life-lessons. It won't answer questions that might interfere with your life-lessons but it will help you work the lessons out for yourself.

I believe the converse is also true, and the implications are enormous: Your higher self can manifest absolutely anything you want, as long as it doesn't interfere with your life-lessons or the lessons of another. If it helps you learn a life-lesson, your higher self will be highly motivated to bring it into your life.


Key Points
Your higher self can and will manifest anything you want, as long as it helps (and doesn't interfere with) your life-lessons.

The key to manifesting, then, is to convince your higher self that the object or experience you desire will help you along your spiritual path and help you learn your life-lessons more quickly. Some people believe you cannot influence your higher self; that it forces you along some inevitable destiny without deviation. I disagree. I believe your life is a dynamic cooperation between you and your higher self, and the power of prayer supports my belief. Prayers are not so much a message to God as they are a way to influence your higher self (which may, in turn, communicate with God).

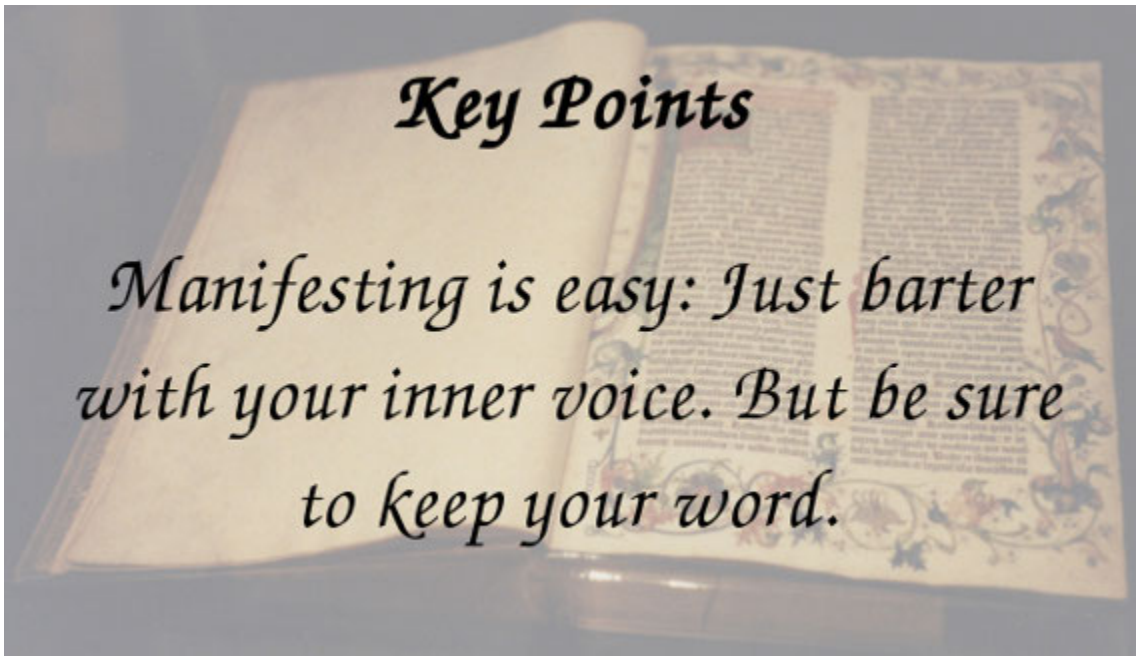
If you've been reading this book and following its suggestions you now have the perfect tool for communicating with your higher self: your inner voice. So here is a very simple, fast and easy way to manifest anything you desire, as long as it doesn't interfere with your life-lessons: It's called bartering with your higher self.

To be most effective, use these eight steps: decide, affirm, barter, visualize, confirm, believe, act, follow-up.

Step 1. The first step is deciding what you want. Choose wisely and be reasonable. Don't ask for something unattainable or that you know will interfere with your life-lessons. Many wise teachers (and even Metallica!) have also advised you to be careful what you wish for: you just might get it.

Step 2. The second step is affirming that the object or experience is already in your life. State it to yourself in a positive way. Repeatedly say something like "The dream car is mine" or "This job is mine" (substitute your desired experience) to yourself.

Step 3. The third step is bartering with your higher self. Initiate communications with your inner voice and tell it exactly what you're willing to do to get that object or experience. Promise your higher self you'll work harder to achieve its goal of spiritual progress in exchange for that object or experience. Also, remember to believe in yourself. Believe that you deserve that object or experience. There's no good reason you shouldn't have it.



Step 4. The fourth step is to visualize what you want with appropriate emotions. Your subconscious/ inner voice talks primarily in images, ideas and feelings. It listens the exact same way. So imagine yourself in the situation you desire, and imagine being filled with joy when it happens. Imagine sitting in your dream home, for example, filled with joy and dedicated to the cause of your higher self.

Step 5. The fifth step is to confirm your desire. There are two parts: Asking and answering. The idea is this: ask yourself, "Is that really what I want?" Then answer yourself, "Yes, that's what I want." This helps convince your subconscious that it's really what you want. This is an important step many books leave out, but I've used it countless times to manifest many things.

This is important: repeat steps 4 and 5 together at least four times. Imagine having what you want, in joy, then ask yourself "Is that what you want?" Then answer, "Yes, that's what I want."

Incidentally, I developed this as a method for remembering dreams. Before I went to bed, I would repeatedly ask myself, “Am I going to remember my dreams tomorrow morning?” Then I'd think about it, “decide” it was a good idea, imagine myself remembering my dreams the next morning, then say to myself, “Yes, I'll remember my dreams.” I'd repeat that as a question and answer about five or six times and it always worked.

Step 6. The sixth step is to change your belief system to allow for the change to come into your life. Believe you can actually attain it.

Step 7. The seventh step is to act : work to attain your goal. Put yourself in a position where you can actually get it. Follow your inner voice's advice to achieve that goal.

Step 8. The eighth and final step is follow-up : keep the promise you made in step three. Do everything you can to attain the goals of your higher self and learn your life-lessons.

Let me give you a concrete example.

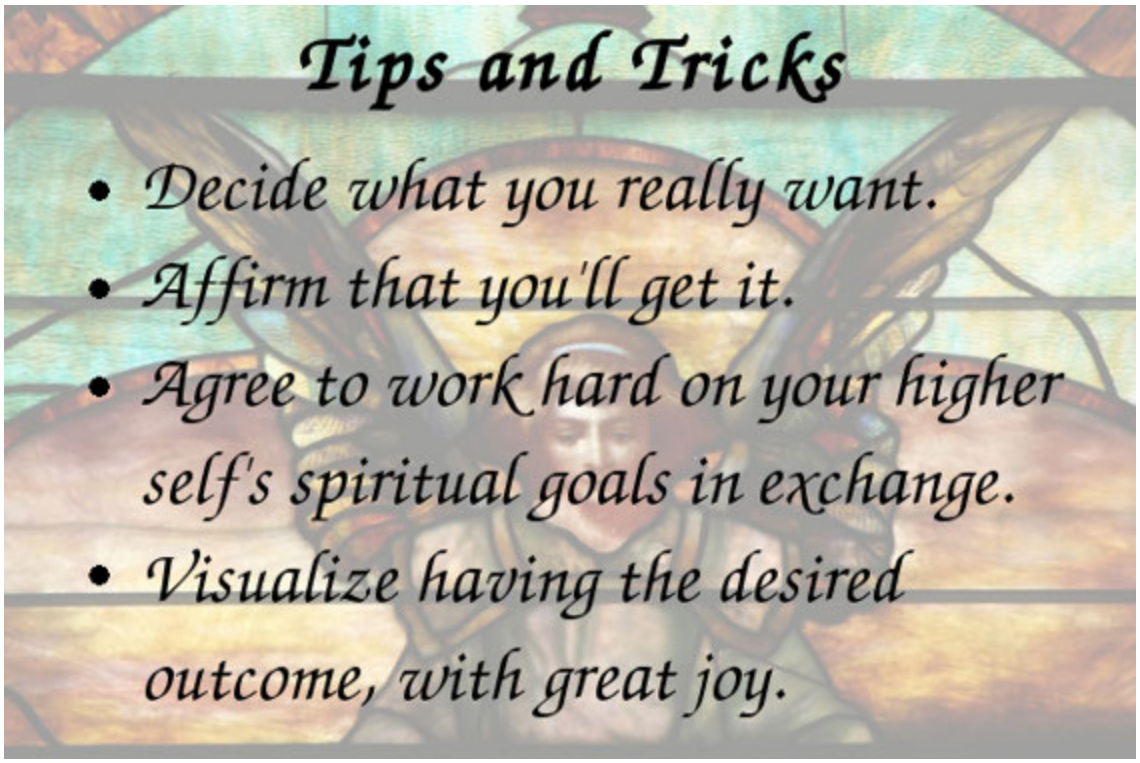
Let's suppose your car died and suddenly you need a car, but you don't have the money.

Step 1. Decide what you want. In this example you want to manifest a car.

Step 2. Initiate contact with your inner voice with your protocol question, then tell it something like this: “A car (and everything I need to get it) is easily flowing into my life.”

Step 3. Barter. Tell your inner voice something like this, and really mean it: “In return, I promise to do everything within my power to learn my current life-lesson no matter how hard it is. I promise to pay attention to what's happening in my life spiritually. I promise to listen to your advice and follow it. I promise to become a more spiritual person. I promise to view everything and every situation from the perspective of my higher self. In return, please send me a car.”

Step 4. Visualize with emotion. Imagine driving joyfully in your car. Imagine rolling the windows down, and feeling the wind in your hair. Imagine the gas gauge on “F”. Feel a joy that accompanies the abundance.


Tips and Tricks
• Decide what you really want.
• Affirm that you'll get it.
• Agree to work hard on your higher self's spiritual goals in exchange.
• Visualize having the desired outcome, with great joy.

Step 5. Confirm. Ask yourself, “Do I want a car? Don't just say the words to yourself, but as in step four, visualize the outcome as well. Then answer yourself, “Yes, that is exactly what should happen.” Repeat this over and over several times: “Do I want a car?” Visualize sitting in your car, then answer, “Yes, that should happen.”

Step 6. Believe. Spend some time convincing yourself that a car can easily come to you.

Step 7. Act. Follow the advice of your inner voice on how to attain that car. If it recommends you buy a lottery ticket, do it. If you get the urge to pan for gold in Colorado or visit Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas, do it. If it feels right, look through the job postings, write that book or follow that urge. Take a test drive. Give the Universe ample opportunity to give you that car. Your inner voice will guide you

to your goal. But remember to be patient. The universe has its own timetable.

Some people have suggested that the Universe won't bend over backwards to fulfill your request: your soulmate won't come knocking on your door; you have to go out into the real world to find her. Likewise, you can't get that job by sitting on your butt and watching television. Wrong. In my experience, the Universe will, in fact, bend over backwards to accommodate your request unless it would interfere with your life-lesson.

The thing is, you should really take steps to allow it to happen. Meet your higher self halfway, if for no other reason than it will help you eliminate doubts that it could happen.

Here's an example: I literally had a span of fifteen years where I did no job hunting. I held four jobs that had all literally found me without my doing anything.

In early 1983, my job as a student worker at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources was scheduled to end and had been extended as far as it could. I needed to find a job. I didn't fill out resumes and I didn't go job hunting, I just started following the steps outlined in this chapter. Shortly after, my brother Don called to invite me to visit him in Arizona to help with his business's computers. A job had found me.

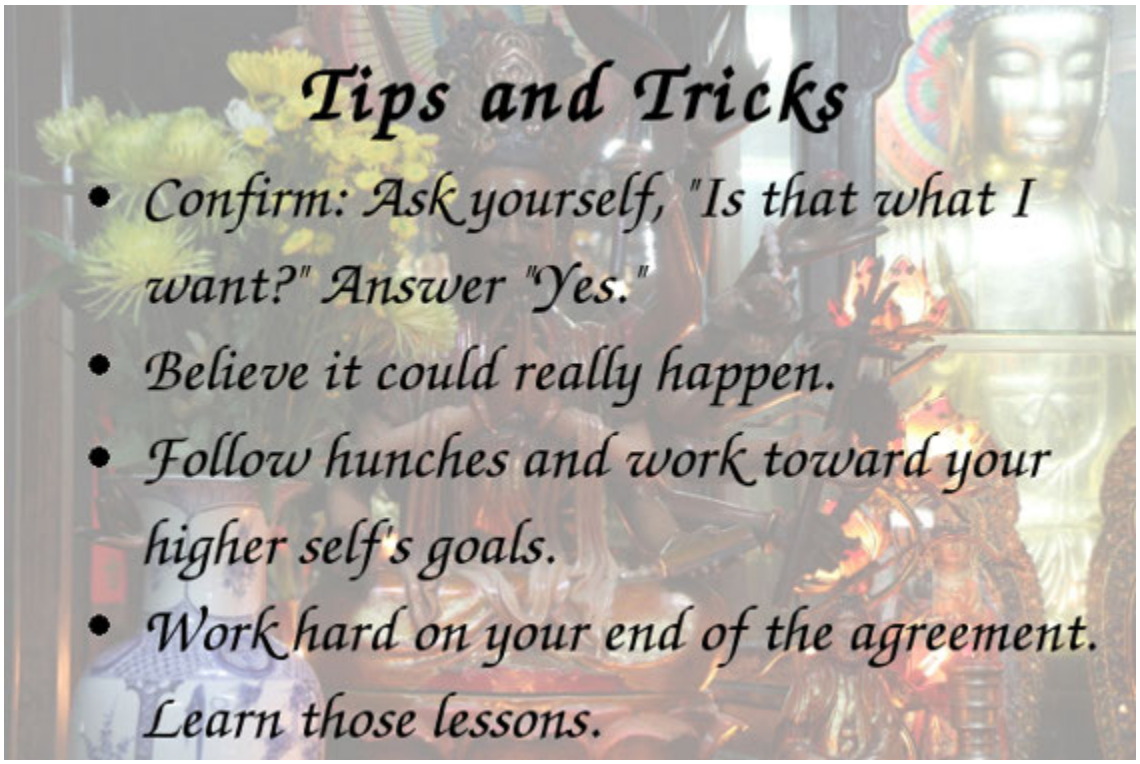
I was only in Arizona for a few weeks, but while I was there a business owner in my home town of Minneapolis called Don and complained that he

needed a computer guru. Don hooked him up with me and by August 1983, a second job had literally found me.

I worked at that job a couple years, then decided to move to Arizona. I started doing independent computer consulting for friends and clients found me through word of mouth. That's the third job I manifested.

In 1987, I was visiting family in Minnesota and my other brother, Joe, literally dragged me along to an impromptu computer job interview where I was offered a job as a computer contractor on the spot. I worked there ten years. A fourth job had literally found me.

Of course, I did have to act: I had to travel to Arizona and back as the opportunities presented themselves.


Tips and Tricks
Confirm: Ask yourself, "Is that what I want?" Answer "Yes."
Believe it could really happen.
Follow hunches and work toward your higher self's goals.
Work hard on your end of the agreement. Learn those lessons.

Step 8. Follow-up. This is the most important step. Once you've made an agreement with your higher self, keep your word. Follow the guidance of your inner voice. It will guide you to spiritual lessons. Pay attention to those lessons. What matters most is your intent to cooperate with your higher self in its pursuit of learning your spiritual lessons, in exchange for receiving your goals.

Ben Franklin once said, “God helps those who help themselves.” I'd like to amend his advice and suggest that “God helps those who help their higher self the most.” In the metaphysical community there's a saying that also applies: “Let go and let God.” Focus on your spiritual goals and let your higher self worry about taking care of your needs.

At this point I need to caution you to be careful about how you phrase your requests because your subconscious can be quite literal. For example, in August 2009 my wife Kathy and I had been trying unsuccessfully to sell our lake cottage up North for two years and I was getting tired of the daily routine. So I started using affirmations like, “I want positive change and newness in my life.” It seemed straightforward and simple enough.

On August 24th, a distracted driver pulled out in front of my motorcycle. The motorcycle was destroyed on impact with the car as I flew through the bike's fairing (windshield). I had a brief but unpleasant stay in the intensive care unit of Unity hospital. It took months of fighting and arguing with insurance companies, but I was finally able to buy a motorcycle to replace the old one. That was newness, alright, but it wasn't very fun. But hey, I learned some life-lessons!

In January 2010 our realtor suggested that the lake cottage might sell quicker if we finished the basement and added a third bedroom and second bathroom. That was newness too, but it cost a lot of money. A month later,

my wife suggested we replace the carpeting in our house. It was newness, but with a high price tag and a lot of labor. Then the refrigerator at the lake cottage broke and had to be replaced. You get the picture.

All that newness cost a lot of money, but no worries. I manifested a bonus check from work, a big state tax refund, a big federal tax refund, two big insurance checks and a raise, all in the span of three months.

As you go through life, try to pay attention to what life is trying to tell you. What issues keep cropping up over and over in your life? Is it your self-worth? Is it some aspect of love? Do you have constant money issues? Materialism? Betrayal issues? Guilt issues? If any issue keeps reappearing in your life, you can bet it's related to your current life-lesson. And working on that life-lesson allows your higher self to bring abundance into your life.

Frequently ask your inner voice for advice about things you encounter throughout the day. Does this situation apply to your current life-lesson? What was this situation meant to teach you?

Next, ask yourself what you can do to learn the lesson. Affirm your self-worth? Become more loving? Change jobs? View material possessions as meaningless props on your spiritual stage?

As long as you're doing your best to learn your life-lessons, and it doesn't interfere with them, you can manifest absolutely anything you want. But you may learn what Buddhists have taught for thousands of years: that attachment and desire cause unhappiness. You don't need all the physical “stuff” and you just might be happier without it.

William Shakespeare wrote that the world is a stage and we are merely players. In fact, the stage comes with props, but the props are meaningless except to support the story you're writing called “life” through your eyes. So write the story of your life and let God do the decorating.

According to people who have had near-death experiences (NDEs) when your life is over, you will have a life-review where you watch your entire life like a movie. You’ll see exactly what you learned and how you affected other people, both good and bad. While you’re alive, do everything you can to make that movie a good one.

In the end, it's not about getting, it's about becoming. It’s not about the things in life, but the experiences and the love in life. Live for Spirit and abundance will automatically happen.

Let's Play!
Manifest by Barter
Barter with your inner voice to manifest things you want. Start out small and simple. Don't try for a new car or a pile of money until you get the hang of it.

Musical Interlude #8

“How It Hits You” by Jon Anderson

Like the other musical interludes, this is not a meditation song at all. It's a pop song from the 1980s. Jon Anderson was the lead singer of the band Yes, but the song is nothing like other Yes songs. And like before, I don't know why it helps me be more psychic, but it does.

What I like about this song is how it alternates not only from side to side, but also the bass line alternates from eight high notes to eight low notes in a rhythmic beat. I found it on a Christmas CD of all things.

Listen to the song in a quiet, meditative state and keep your eyes closed. When the bass line hits the eight high notes, turn your eyes slightly upward and imagine your arms and hands are reaching up to the sky.

When the bass line hits the eight low notes, bring your eyes back to a normal position (but still closed) and imagine your arms and hands are reaching down to the floor. This is like doing stretching exercises, but only in your mind. Keep doing this throughout the song.

Chapter 31

“One too many days, One too many years

I wasted for nothing

I never realized, The truth is inside

Of every man for all to see”

--Stratovarius, “Season of Change”

Season of Change

In October of 2011 after I finished this book (or so I thought), I prepared to have it published, but I had a nagging doubt. It felt like something was missing. I went over every chapter and determined that I had said all I wanted to say in the book.

At a loss, I asked my inner voice, “What's missing?”

It said “One more chapter.”

I argued, “About what? I've written down everything, haven't I?”

It said, “Yes. So far.”

The message was pretty cryptic and was accompanied by a feeling that I shouldn't pry because it was related to a life-lesson. I suspected that the chapter would revolve around something that hadn't happened yet. So I left the book alone and didn't work on it a couple months.

On Saturday November 26, my sister, my wife and I took my mom out of the nursing home to see the not-so-famous fish house parade in Aitkin Minnesota where she lived. This is a unique celebration where the whole town comes out to show off their ice-fishing houses by pulling them down the street.

After the parade, we took mom shopping and had a fun-filled afternoon together. Mom was grateful to get out of that place, if only for a few hours.

Eventually she got tired and hungry. We couldn't take her to a restaurant because in recent weeks she had had some problems with her throat, and swallowing was becoming difficult. She recently had some choking incidents and could only eat food that was chopped up very fine. So we had to return her to the nursing home for dinner.

The three of us chatted while mom ate lasagna, which was chopped into small pieces. But then she got an uncomfortable look on her face. She was choking again. We called the nurses to come and help.

She stopped breathing and passed out. The nurses rushed her to another room where they tried to dislodge the food from her throat. Finally, her throat was clear, but she had stopped breathing. Soon her heart stopped and they administered CPR, despite the fact that she had signed a Do Not Resuscitate waiver. I don't fault the nurses; I'm grateful they made that decision and saved her life.

They got her heart pumping and rushed her to the hospital. The CPR had been hard on her fragile bones, but there were no broken ribs. A day later, she was discharged from the hospital and sent back to the nursing home. It seemed like she was getting better, but we knew she would be in pain for some time.

Back at the nursing home, on the window sill of her room, I noticed an unfamiliar plant. Someone had given her an Amaryllis plant and it sat on her window with its bud tightly closed. My inner voice pointed it out, but didn't say why. I've never been much of a plant person so I shrugged it off.

Mom was very weak. For days, my sister and I helped her drink protein shakes to regain her strength, but she couldn't eat solid food. Instead of becoming stronger, she became weaker.

A few days later she became worse. Aspiration pneumonia had taken hold and her lungs started to fill with fluid. The doctor told us she was not strong enough to fight off the infection or cough enough to clear her lungs. Her body was shutting down and she didn't have long to live. A day later she was too weak to eat or drink and she couldn't take her pills. We had to face the fact that she was dying.

I called my brothers and told them to fly back to Minnesota as soon as they could. Then I excused myself from work and went to the nursing home to sit by her side.

For days my siblings and I sat by her side in the nursing home and watched her body whither away. I held her hand for hours on end, and as I did, my inner voice went into overdrive. It talked almost nonstop in a rapid fire conversation that only I could hear.

Mom grew up in the Great Depression and faced a lot of adversity, so on and on my inner voice talked about her life, her death, and the lessons she learned. It talked almost nonstop for hours. “She was a warrior, and that's why she chose a lifetime that included World War II. One of her life-lessons was about overcoming adversity, so she chose to grow up during the Great Depression. Her lessons were mostly related to overcoming adversity. She learned many lessons about love. She also had many lessons related to worthiness and self-love, as her first husband abandoned her to raise two small children. She was a teacher and taught many, but mostly by example.”

“She was outwardly weak, but inwardly very strong.” It sent me images about her quitting cigarettes cold turkey when I was a toddler. But that was easy compared to some of her lessons. After she broke her hip, the doctors treated her pain for months with Oxycontin, a highly addictive narcotic. She quit that cold turkey too, without a single complaint.

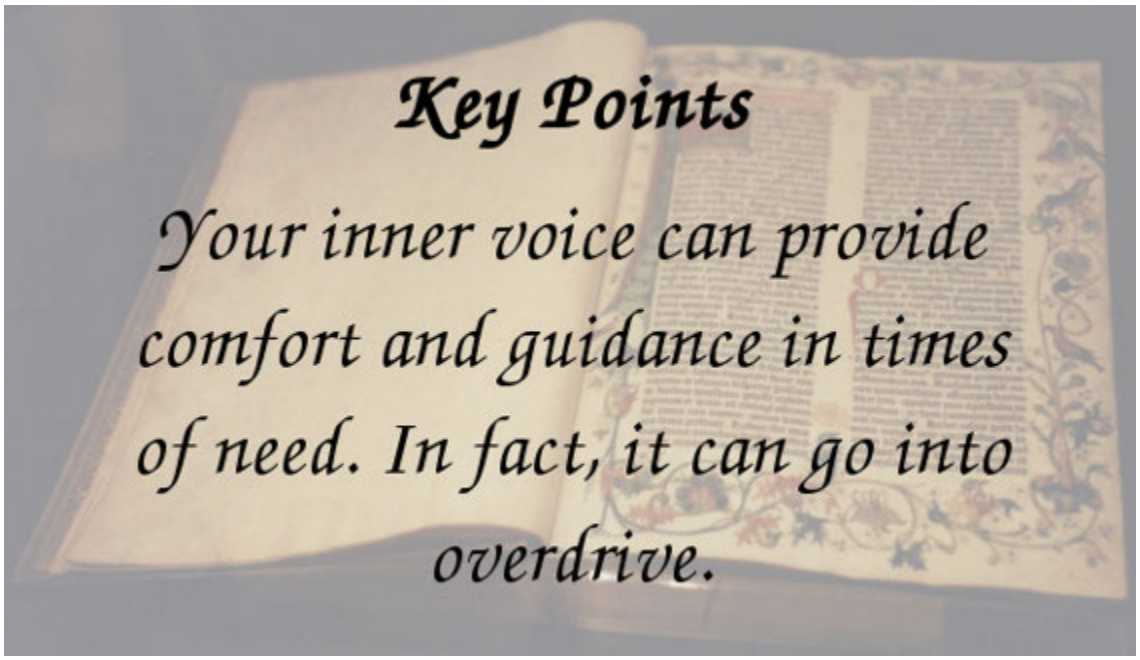
It reminded me of a quote by Carlos Casteneda: “A warrior cannot avoid pain and grief, but only the indulging in them.” It asked me to focus not on the pain of my loss, but on the joy she would feel when she gets to the Other Side.

It sent me images of the the smile on her face and the joy she would soon feel when reunited with her dead friends and family. It sent me images of how incredible it would be for her to walk, then run, then fly on the Other Side.

My mom was never a complainer, so one of my mom's famous quotes was “I'm okay” or “I'm fine.” So it said, “You've been to the Other Side, so you know she's okay.”

I decided to turn some of its long discourse into a eulogy, which I typed into my phone as the tears ran down my cheeks. As time went on, I knew this was the chapter missing from this book.

Even as I held my mother's hand, my inner voice symbolically held my hand. It was almost too much information. There were times when I just wanted to sit in silence and grieve, to try to cope with her impending death, but it just kept on talking. It just wouldn't shut up. I actually toyed with the idea of naming this chapter after another computer acronym, “STFU!”



I sat by mother's side with my siblings Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. At some point my inner voice became more quiet as I started to accept what was happening. It had comforted me while I needed it and its job was done.

Mother was too weak to talk and she kept her eyes closed most of the time. But she opened them a few times to look at us and her eyes expressed everything she wanted to say. My sister held her hand and whispered into her ear, “I love you, Mom. I know: you love me too. It's okay, mom, you can let go whenever you're ready. We'll be alright.” I remembered the song “Disappear” by Dream Theater:

So I'm moving on, I'll never forget

As you lay there and watched me,

Accepting the end, I knew you were scared

You were strong, I was trying

I gave you my hand, I said it's okay,

Letting go, time to leave here

And I'll carry on the best that I can

Without you here beside me,

Let him come take you home.

I squeezed her hand. Silently, inside my head I said, “It's okay, mama. We'll go hand-in- hand. Maybe I can walk you down the tunnel.” Of course I was too upset to induce an out-of-body experience, but I could still walk with her in my imagination. So I visualized the tunnel, and did just that.

My inner voice said “Like a father walks his daughter down the aisle when she's married and starting a new life, so too it's appropriate that her son should walk his mother down the tunnel on her way to a new life.”

Later that day, my inner voice told me that she had left her physical body for the last time. She was now safely on the Other Side. Her pain was over. It also said that our bodies are machines, so her body would continue to function for a while longer.

Hours later, as I sat by her side and held her hand, I closed my eyes and spoke inwardly to her as I had many times in the past days. I said “Mom, don't worry about us. We'll be fine. I love you so much.” At that point I felt a soft kiss on the tip of my nose, and it startled me. A tiny smile came to my lips, even as the tears streaked down my face. I had no doubt she was now in spirit, even as her body still struggled to breathe.

I had slept very little in the past several days, and the few hours I did were on the sofa at the nursing home. I knew she had already crossed over, so I went home to take my pills and get some badly needed sleep. Just in case there was any consciousness left in her body, I whispered into her ear, “I'm going to go home now and get some sleep, Mama. I'll be back first thing in the morning. You don't need to wait for me.”

Tuesday morning came way too early. I showered and got ready as usual. Once again I had to pick a t-shirt. Too distraught to decide, I asked my inner voice for advice. It said, “Wear your white t-shirt.”

“Which one? I've got many.”

“Doesn't matter, as long as it's white.”

It was -5F degrees outside so I knew my car would be very cold. I thought, “Maybe I should wear a sweatshirt over it too.” It said, “The dark navy blue one.”

Since Mom's room was very warm, I envisioned taking the blue sweatshirt off when I got there. It responded: “It is symbolic: your mother has shed her tired body to reveal the shining white soul inside, just as easily as you take off your blue sweatshirt to reveal the white t-shirt beneath.”

I finished dressing and put my coat on and got ready to leave. As I walked to the car, my inner voice said “Get the audio adapter from the truck and bring it.” I got the adapter and plugged it into the car's audio system. I plugged my iPhone into the adapter and put it into shuffle play.

I've got more than 5,100 songs on my iPhone, but as I drove to the nursing home, it started to play the song “Season of Change” by Stratovarius. It was perfect. It expressed a lot of what I needed to hear.

All the sorrow and the pain

Will be washed away by rain

And eternal joy will come,

It can be found by everyone

Though the end is drawing near

I'm not feeling any fear

I have found the truth inside

After all the tears I've cried

I drove back to the nursing home and sat by my mom's side again. As her body took its last breath, I held her right hand and my sister held her left and we interlinked arms with the rest of our family and she passed away peacefully.

The nursing home staff later told us they had never seen a family with so much love and so much caring for their loved one.

It was a bright sunny day, and my inner voice suggested I open the blinds to let in some light, symbolic of the light that mother went into.

As I pulled the blinds open, we noticed that the Amaryllis plant that sat on her window for weeks no longer had a bud. The bud had opened up to reveal a beautiful flower in full bloom. My inner voice said it was also symbolic, as she was now blooming on the Other Side.

Psychic Sensitivity Exercise #8

Tingling at the top of your head

This is a very simple exercise I sometimes use, and the process is very easy:

Take a walk. As you're walking, imagine a tingling sensation at the very top of your head. Imagine there's a mild electrical current dancing at the top of your skull.

At the same time, imagine there's a ball of light about the size of a grapefruit playfully dancing on top your head.

Like some of the other exercises I've given, I don't know why this works. I just know that when I do this exercise, I become more psychically sensitive.

Chapter 32

“Calling grace, She'll never fall again

Love remains in her

Softly, her inner voice has learned to speak

Following her dreams”

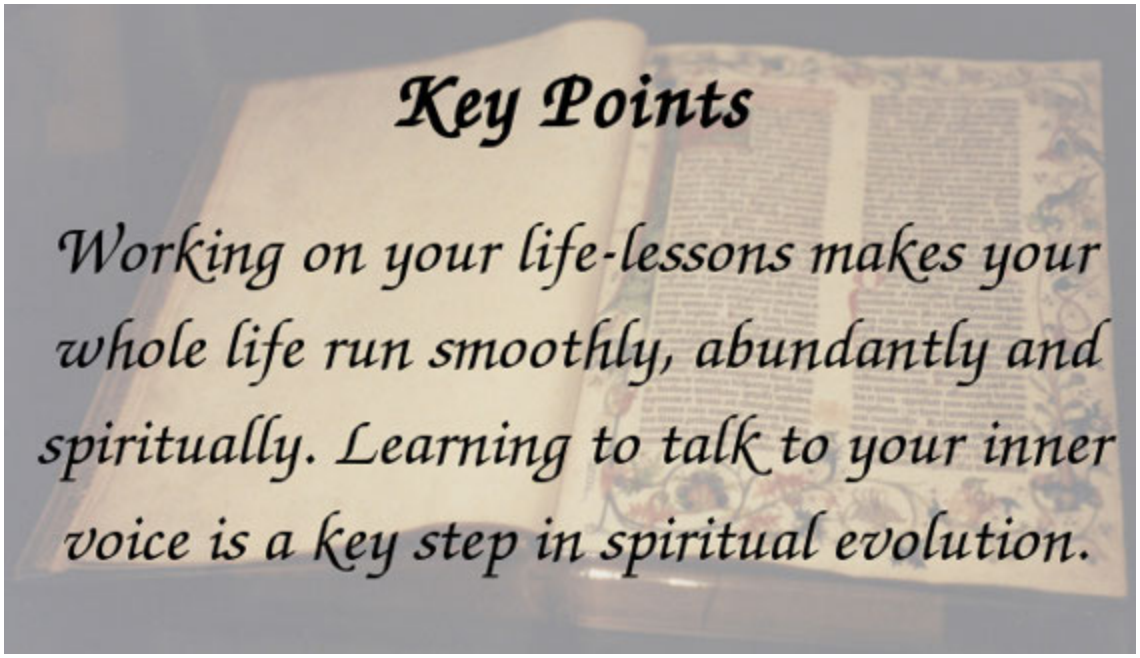
--Tarja, “Calling Grace”

Final Words

In my pursuit of out-of-body experiences, and the kind of meditation it requires, I stumbled upon my inner voice. For me it started as a game and slowly evolved into an invaluable source of not only wisdom and spiritual insight, but practical advice and psychic information.

My psychic sensitivity or awareness has increased and decreased throughout the years depending on the level of stress in my life and how distracted I get with worldly concerns. It all depends on whether I'm paying attention to my inner voice or if it gets drowned out by my noisy thoughts and the chatter of my internal dialog. Despite all this, my inner voice is not some “psychic ability” I can turn on or off. It’s always “on.” No matter how distracted I get, if I use my “protocol question” it has always been there for me, ready to answer questions, to teach me and guide me.

In talking to my inner voice, I came to believe that we all came to this physical world to learn (and teach) a series of spiritual life-lessons. Our lives are carefully designed and crafted by our higher selves to reach those goals. Events are carefully timed and chance meetings are anything but chance.


Key Points
Working on your life-lessons makes your whole life run smoothly, abundantly and spiritually. Learning to talk to your inner voice is a key step in spiritual evolution.

We walk a spiritual path that is continually being planned as we go. While rare glimpses of our plan lead some to believe in fate or destiny, the cement is still very wet; we are completely free to choose our direction and pace. I firmly believe we can do anything, be anything and have anything we want, as long as it fits within the framework of our life-lessons.

If you fight against your lessons, your life will be bumpy and painful, and you will be unhappy. You will feel dashed on the rocks in the river of life. But if you focus on learning your life-lessons, not only will you become more spiritual, your life will run more smoothly and you will be happier. Abundance will be yours.

You can also manifest anything you want in life, and your higher self is happy to give it in exchange for your spiritual evolution. As a car relies upon the cooperation of several complex parts to run smoothly, so too does your life. Your whole life is a partnership between your body, your consciousness, your inner voice and through it, your higher self. The better you interact, the better it runs.

Learning to talk with your inner voice is part of that cooperation. And as you do, eventually you become less concerned with ego matters. You start to live only for Spirit. You live not for entertainment, but for your spiritual lessons and goals. In short, you become an instrument of God.

That's not to say your life will be effortless. On the contrary, the more effort you put into your life-lessons, the more you will get out of life.

It doesn't stop there. My inner voice once said, “Look deeper and deeper within and who will you meet? God. For you are a reflection of God's light.”

Your inner voice is there all the time, whether you acknowledge it or not. You only need to learn how to pay attention to it and communicate with it. Your inner voice will give you a never-ending source of advice and spirituality.

In the end, it doesn't really matter whether the wisdom and insight come from your higher self, angels or from spirits. It's the wisdom itself that matters; if it makes you more comfortable to think about it one way or another, that's okay.

I hope you've enjoyed this experience of learning to talk to your inner voice, or at least the story of how I did.

Just remember: There is no destination in life. What's important is your journey: your relationship with God and who you are inside. And who you are inside is God. It's all about the choices you make.

I'll end the book with the same words I used to end my third OBE journal: “At any rate, may you always follow your path, listen to your inner voice, and be true to yourself.”

Appendix I

Putting It All Together

I've explained how I developed my inner voice and how it slowly progressed from a game into an invaluable tool for wisdom, spiritual development and psychic awareness. The time has come to put it all together into a cohesive whole, a set of instructions you can use to improve your life.

Chapter 1. Put yourself in the guru's robes

Make time to ask yourself philosophical or religious questions and pretend you're the guru. Pause in the silence to reflect, then “make up” an answer based on the first thing that pops into your mind. Pause your inner dialog long enough to get stray thoughts; take the first ideas that come to you and morph them into your “wise” answer.

Chapter 2. Establish a communications protocol

Choose a “protocol question” you can always ask yourself to get into the right frame of mind. You have to pick a question that will allow you to dig deep inside yourself for the answer.

Chapter 3. See things as spiritual metaphors

Take walks and try to see deeper meanings that lie beneath the things around you.

Chapter 4. Play until wisdom comes w/o asking

I wrote about how I kept at it and eventually started getting “answers” without asking questions. I started automatically seeing the wisdom in things. Be persistent and you’ll get there.

Chapter 5. Ask yourself to “say something wise”

Instead of asking philosophical questions, ask yourself to just “Say something wise” and make up answers. Repeat and keep reaching deeper inside.

Chapter 6. Give yourself daily spiritual lessons

Each morning, give yourself a spiritual lesson for the day. Just make something up. Make every day a spiritual learning experience.

Chapter 7. Listen to music with positive messages

Don't feed your subconscious negative messages. Listen to music with positive, spiritual lyrics. If you do listen to negative music, interpret them through a filter of spirituality or “silly-ize” them.

Chapter 8. Be more love-oriented

Your inner voice is love-based, so communications will be stronger if you are love-based too.

Chapter 9. Turn subconscious ideas to sentences

Pull images and ideas from your subconscious, form them into sentences, then repeat the sentences silently to yourself.

Chapter 10. It's not just for wisdom

I wrote about how I started getting psychic impressions from within. Keep your mind open.

Chapter 11. Be non-judgmental

Increase your psychic sensitivity by being non-judgmental. Psychic information will flow more freely to you.

Chapter 12. Ask about other people's lessons

Learn from what other people are going through. Empathize, but don't mistake their lessons for yours.

Chapter 13. Don't doubt yourself

Trust yourself and you'll be ahead of the game. Gain confidence through verification.

Chapter 14. Recognize the voice of fear

Pay attention to impressions accompanied by a feeling of peace and calm. Discard impressions accompanied by fear, negativity or strong emotions.

Chapter 15. Be self-confident and use solitude

Remember: This life is a "Grand Illusion" and it doesn't matter what people think. Make time for meditation, introspection and communication with

your inner voice. Get away from the crowds and use solitude to your advantage.

Chapter 16. Use music to increase vocabulary

Spiritual music increases your inner voice's vocabulary. Pay attention to what songs are saying.

Chapter 17. Use wordplay and a sense of humor

Nurture your own sense of humor and be lighthearted. Spirituality is not heavy, it's playful.

Chapter 18. Ask it to interpret your dreams

Since your dreams and inner voice both come from your subconscious, your inner voice is perfectly positioned to give you insights about your dreams and what you're going through in life.

Chapter 19. Judge by the outcome

Don't judge your inner voice by your preconceptions or insecurities. Judge it by the things it suggests: Does the information advance your spiritual

growth? Does it help others?

Chapter 20. Be open to helping others

Be open to messages about giving help where help is needed. Service is an important part of spirituality.

Chapter 21. Read sacred texts and philosophy

Increase your inner voice's vocabulary by reading books, especially religious texts. Since religions are hopefully founded by people who were in contact with God, learn from what they have written. Don't blindly believe what someone else tells you about God or follow their path. Go back to the source, if not through your own communion with God, then through someone else's.

Chapter 22. Give it the benefit of the doubt

Assume your inner voice is innocent until proven guilty, but don't follow blindly: always use common sense before taking the advice of your inner voice.

Chapter 23. Be open to inner voice messages

Try to keep a “running question mark” in your mind. In other words, try to remain open to messages from your inner voice throughout the day and in every situation.

Chapter 24. Life-lessons often block answers

Learn to recognize and identify your major life-lessons by the issues you're facing and where they come from. Working on them will accelerate your spiritual progress. Bear in mind that your inner voice may be silent and not answer questions relating to your major life lessons.

Chapter 25. Remember: you are not alone

Remember that you're not alone and you're not going crazy. Talking to your subconscious is a normal, natural thing to do.

Chapter 26. Don't ask unobtainable questions

Beware of self-deception and remember that your inner voice is designed for spiritual guidance, not material gain.

Chapter 27. Render service

When you view yourself as a tool in God's hands, you can follow the directions of your inner voice and do remarkable things without even trying.

Chapter 28. Your inner voice may mislead you

I wrote about how my inner voice would sometimes allow me to mislead myself for the best possible outcome. Don't be alarmed. Try not to be as stubborn as I am so your inner voice doesn't have to use tricks to lead you where you need to go.

Chapter 29. Remember levels of consciousness

Your inner voice is a way to communicate with your higher self. Your inner voice is here to help you with spiritual development and your major life-lessons. If you cooperate with it and learn your lessons, your life will run more smoothly and happily. If you resist your life-lessons, you will encounter problems and be in turmoil.

Chapter 30. Use your inner voice to manifest

Your higher self will eagerly give you anything you desire in life, but only if it helps you learn your life-lessons. But remember: desire causes attachment and attachment causes unhappiness. The story of your life and everything you bring with you into the afterlife—the lessons, the

experiences and the love—are all that really matters; the rest are just props on the stage of life. Focus on your spiritual goals, not materialism.

Chapter 31: It may go into overdrive

In times of crisis or extreme distress, don't be surprised if your inner voice goes into overdrive. It may console you and flood you with images.

Appendix II

Questions and Answers

Here are some questions and answers about your inner voice.

Can anyone do it? Can I do it?

Absolutely. I believe that God brought us all into this world well-equipped with tools for spiritual self-discovery. One of those tools is the out-of-body experience, the subject of my first two books. Another tool in your toolbox is your inner voice.

There are messages for all who listen within. They're often more quiet than the tiniest of whispers, just a stray thought that occurs to us when we're not paying attention. We often dismiss the messages as subconscious noise, a slightly different kind of chatter in a din of chaotic inner dialog.

But I am spiritually incompetent, aren't I?

We're all spiritually incompetent, but only as an infant is incompetent at walking. Eventually, that infant grows, uses years of practice, strengthening, and trial-and-error to gain the skill of walking. Likewise, we

learn spiritual competency through practice, meditation, solitude and introspection.

How do I listen to my inner voice?

Sometimes it takes an inner crisis to open the doors of perception, as it happened for the Buddha, or Neale Donald Walsh, author of the best-selling Conversations With God books. However, you don't need a crisis. You can learn to pay attention to those messages, to sort them out from the rest of the inner chatter. All it takes is practice. This book explains how I gradually discovered how to use my inner voice. Armed with that knowledge, you can follow the same steps and learn to do it too.

Why do you call it your "inner voice"?

People have invented lots of words to describe their inner voice, usually words that make them feel most comfortable. Some people call the ability "channeling" and the source their "Spirit Guide," insisting it's external. It's funny how God loves to play hide and seek, looking at us through the guise (or eyes) of another. That's not to say the channeled entities are fictitious. I just tend to think there's an easier explanation.

Others think of it as a conversation with God, and perhaps they're right: I believe that we all have a connection to God.

Still others prefer to think of it as their atman or higher self, both of which seem more accurate descriptions to me than the word God which is usually chock full of connotations.

Some even call it their “daemon,” which, in computers, means a helper program that runs in the background. A very accurate description!

With these labels comes the temptation to assign different values to the messages, or worse, to the entity delivering them: People want to make the messages more believable by ascribing supernatural attributes. I believe the messages are more important than the medium, so I put more emphasis there.

I just call it my “inner voice” because it shies away from all the conjecture about angels and spirits and focuses on the one thing we do know: it comes from within.

How often do you talk to your inner voice now?

It's hard to say, since it's so ingrained and automatic now. A rough estimate is that I exchange a few sentences with it about 20 - 30 times a day.

When is the best time of the day to do it?

Any time is good, but I've found reception seems to be clearer in the morning before my analytical mind has gotten too noisy.

What's the difference between clairaudience and your inner voice?

It depends on your definition of clairaudience. Many people define it as hearing (auditory) extrasensory information, and since inner voice isn't really "hearing" at all, but interpreting subconscious thoughts, it doesn't qualify. Others argue that such an explanation is mincing words.

What about spirit communications?

On Tuesday June 1, 2010, I was sitting at my desk, working hard on a computer problem for work, when suddenly my inner voice sent me a few bars from a song. It was the opening bars of a song I was familiar with but didn't listen to often. I paused to remember the lyrics. It was by heavy metal legend Ronnie James Dio, who sang lead vocals in famous mega-bands like Dio, Black Sabbath, and Rainbow. Dio had recently died of stomach cancer and his death had saddened me and shocked the music world. A memorial service for Dio was scheduled in Los Angeles the next weekend.

Suddenly I remembered the tune and the lyrics came to me. It was a fun song called "Better in the Dark." The song's opening words are:

"I'm alright, I'm crossing over,

I just shot the sun"

It almost seemed like this was a message from Dio, reassuring me that he was all right after his death.

So did the message come from the spirit of Ronnie James Dio himself, or from my inner voice? To be honest, I don't know. Maybe Dio sent the message to my higher self, who relayed it to my inner voice. It makes me more comfortable to think about it that way. I'm more comfortable seeing myself as an ordinary guy, not as a medium or channeler, although that may be exactly what I'm doing.

Incidents like this and years of dealing with spirits in my OBEs have finally cured my spirit-phobia. Spirits can be helpful and provide valuable insight, especially given their vantage point in the afterlife. They're basically just ordinary people who have died. Their opinions and information will vary, just as they do among the living.

I now believe that Christianity and other religions forbid spirit communications for several reasons: First, as a means for the religious authorities to keep control out of the hands of the common people. Second, some spirits are unscrupulous, just as some people are. They can be helpful and informative but should never be trusted blindly because they have their own agenda that may or may not align with yours.

Are there restrictions on the inner voice messages I can receive?

Yes. Your inner voice won't answer questions related to your current life-lesson. You have to work through those issues on your own. It will, however, answer peripheral questions.

Should I share my experiences with my friends or family?

Not unless it's someone you absolutely trust. Many people don't understand the inner voice and wouldn't accept any reasonable explanation. They may just think you've lost your mind.

Should I share it with my priest, pastor, rabbi, imam, or other spiritual authority?

I don't advise it. Religious “authorities” give stern warnings about spiritual self-discovery or experimentation because organized religions would be out of business if everyone learned they can manage their own spiritual health and get their own answers.

Religious authorities may say they know more than you. “You’re playing a dangerous game. You can’t trust your own feelings or perceptions. Satan is trying to trick you, to lead you into sin. Don't gamble with your soul. You can only trust [our interpretation of] the one true source of wisdom: the (insert Bible, Koran, Bhagavad Gita, Talmud, Tao Te Ching, Avesta or other holy book of choice here).”

They'll say: “It's ridiculous to think you can find the answers yourself.” They want you to be a good sheep and follow them. Christianity even uses the symbol of Jesus as a shepherd.

Despite their training or depth of knowledge, they're just ordinary people like you and me. They may have “book-knowledge” and even deep inner wisdom, but they usually don't have youranswers. Only you do.

What makes me qualified to get my own spiritual answers?

Because the answers are inside you. We ignore this message because we simply can’t believe it's true. Instead, we deny it by silently chanting negative messages about ourselves in a never-ending inner dialog: I’m just an ordinary person, not an expert. We're raised to believe the answers are anywhere else but inside, so we perpetually reinforce the belief that we are spiritually inept, and our beliefs become our reality.

A few brave people have rejected those negative beliefs and broken out of that mold to find their own answers inside. They had names like Jesus, Buddha, Lao Tzu, Moses, Krishna, Zoroaster and Mohammad. Most of the world's great religions were started by people who got answers notfrom the spiritual authorities of their day, but from inside. They ignored stern warnings from the spiritual authorities of their society, accepted the dreaded title of heretic, and embarked on their own path of spiritual discovery. They rose above their egos and sought their own connection with God by going within.

Often they didn't call it “inner wisdom” because, after all, that would be an outrageous and heretical claim. Jesus went up the hill to pray or consult with God, alone. He also instructed people to pray, not together in a church, but alone in a quiet place. Moses went up the mountain to consult with Yahweh, alone. Buddha meditated under a bodhi tree, alone. And, of course, famous Hindu yogis and gurus throughout the ages have taught meditation, going inward. They all used alone-time to find the answers inside.

Each of these founders rebelled against his childhood religion and admonished the people to abandon their shallow ways and seek God in earnest. They always met with opposition. Jesus ruffled so many feathers, it got him crucified.

The founders found the answers inside themselves, so why shouldn't you?

Is it okay to seek spiritual advice from the authorities?

Yes, of course. It's natural to seek spiritual advice from a guru, priest, rabbi, imam, or counselor, because they've put themselves in a position of authority. It's natural to seek the answers in the Bible, Koran, Talmud, Tao Te Ching, Bhagavad Gita, Avesta or other holy book. After all, these are timeless messages from someone else's inner voice and often still apply today. Just bear in mind that these messages are spiritual messages meant for everyone, whereas your inner voice's messages are applicable to your life and your situation.

What's next?

I believe we're at a critical juncture in the history of humankind. Our whole society is drowning at the hands of our own rampant greed and materialism. The bumps and bruises we are now feeling are due, I think, to a lack of inner guidance and closeness to God.

In order to survive, we need to become more spiritual, grow closer to God, and learn our life-lessons. We can't expect “government” or anyone else to deficit-spend us out of our problems. In order to change the world, we must first change ourselves. As Gandhi said, “Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

We all must take personal responsibility for our actions. We must take charge of our own spiritual health, which means developing a personal relationship with God and no longer blindly following the directions of well-meaning but possibly misguided religious authorities.

We all walk upon our own individual paths, and we should all learn to follow our inner guidance to stay on our path. I firmly believe that the first step in doing so is developing a strong communication link with our inner voices.

If the world's leaders all developed a close personal relationship with God and learned to follow their hearts, guided by their inner voices, this world would become the utopia we all seek. And that's regardless of what religious paths they follow.

Even if that never happens, learning to talk to your inner voice will almost certainly create immeasurable happiness and harmony in your life, and that will have a positive effect on everyone you come in contact with.

About the Author

Robert (Bob) Peterson was born on April 14, 1961. He has been studying and inducing out-of-body experiences and psychic experiences since he graduated from high school in 1979. He graduated from the University of Minnesota Institute of Technology, with a B.S. degree in computer science in 1984. While attending the University, he became more proficient at out-of-body exploration, while keeping detailed journals of his experiences. At the same time, he did volunteer work for a student-based organization called the Minnesota Society for Parapsychological Research (MSPR), which gave him experience as a "Ghost Buster" before the movie made the subject popular.

Since college, he has had a very successful career in systems level computer programming. He lived in Phoenix, Arizona in 1985 and 1986, where he started editing and occasionally contributing articles for a local spiritually

themed newsletter called The Spontaneous Self. In 1987, he moved to Rochester, Minnesota and worked as a contract programmer at the IBM plant until 1996. During that time, he compiled his experiences and journals into his first book, Out of Body Experiences: How to have them and what to expect(Hampton Roads Publishing, 1997) which has been available online for free since 1996. His second book, Lessons Out of the Body, was published in 2001. His third book is a novel titled The Gospel According to Mike.

Today, Bob works for Linux software leader Red Hat. He lives near Brainerd, Minnesota with his wife and soulmate, Kathy. They have no children. His hobbies include writing, traveling, biking, woodworking, stained glass, fishing, kayaking, and strategy games. His web site is:

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